

THE EFFECTS OF VIOLENCE IN MY COMMUNITY

Violence is a broad topic that we talk about but can never really, truly understand unless we've experienced it. This is a firsthand account of the violence that has plagued our city in the hope that you will not pity us, but rather better understand our circumstances.

I have lived in East St. Louis since the age of ten. At that age many things from the outside world, such as violence, were foreign to me. Upon moving in not long after Thanksgiving evening, I endured my first drive-by shooting. It was a traumatic experience, to say the least. However, those around me acted as though it was something as average as the mailman coming to deliver mail. And at that time, it confused me how something so despicable and so hateful was seen as a natural part of their lives. I guess that's what this issue stems from: those people who have to endure it are just allowing it to happen with no objections.

This was just one of many incidents I have seen throughout my time of living here. The saddest part is that it wasn't the last. I am now a sophomore in high school and I've lost more classmates than I thought was possible. Only one from these deaths was from natural causes. Going to funerals and candlelight are a part of our routine. Creating posters and signing get well cards has become a normal task. And although it never ceases to shock us that a friend of ours or even a neighbor was gunned down due to violence, it also never ceases to hurt us. It has simply just become a part of our lives to accept that this is how things are.

There are 26,000 people who live here in East St. Louis. Ninety-five percent are black, and more than two-thirds of the city's children live in poverty. East St. Louis has become a well-known hot spot for crime. Our city has become a statistic. This is affecting our city on both a mental and emotional level. Yet there are no places we can express our feelings, so the person affected by this becomes the one affecting others. And so, a deadly cycle continues.

I'm one of the people caught in this deadly cycle. Who's to say I won't be the next lifeless body found on our streets? The body that's swept under the rug like all the others? Who's to say it's not your mother or your sister or your brother? We constantly walk our streets in fear of not making it home. Our parents pray over us because that's all they can do when we pass the threshold of their homes. They take us to church because, as they say, "A family that prays together stays together." For them, God is the only safe haven they have. This is what our city is like.



Z.S.
HIGH SCHOOL
SOPHOMORE
EAST ST. LOUIS

FIRST STOP

A STRATEGIC PLAN TO REDUCE YOUTH VIOLENCE AND VICTIMIZATION WITHIN GREATER EAST ST. LOUIS

INTRODUCTION

Over the last half-century, we've proven our inability to prioritize our children, particularly their safety and well-being. **Now is the time to build a community that is just for kids.**¹

Our nation urgently needs local communities to adopt and use collaborative multi-sector approaches to reduce youth violence and victimization. For maximum effectiveness, these approaches must prioritize leadership by those most affected by violence, injustice and inequity in order to effect structural and systemic changes that can support and sustain inclusive and healthy communities.²

Within the Greater East St. Louis area, the East Side Aligned (ESA) movement has been bringing people from all walks of life and organizations from every sector together to tackle structural and systemic issues perpetuating inequity and injustice for young people. Harnessing the collective strength of age- and issue-specific coalitions, ESA stakeholders are working to align policy, practice and investment to ensure all children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life.

To effectively create a safe and thriving community and pursue equity and justice for our kids, we need to—FIRST STOP and—increase our community's commitment, civic infrastructure and power to reduce youth violence and victimization.

FIRST STOP is a strategic plan to reduce youth violence and victimization within Greater East St. Louis. It is nested within the existing framework of the ESA movement and is an addendum to the ESA Roadmap, our community's comprehensive strategy to ensure all children and youth are healthy, safe and secure; ready to learn and work; and empowered to create change.

The ESA Roadmap was developed through an intensive 18-month stakeholder engagement and planning process, co-led by youth. It is comprised of 14 sub-goals and over 180 interconnected strategies to improve the readiness and well-being of young people. In December 2015, ESA stakeholders prioritized sub-goals to focus on over the next three years. *"All children and youth feel and are safe"* was identified as our number one priority—the first stop of our roadmap.

¹ [*Building A Community Just For Kids: Deaconess' Commitment to Racial Equity*](#)

² [*Collaborating for Equity and Justice: Moving Beyond Collective Impact*](#)

THE PROBLEM

Violence is serious problem within the footprint of East St. Louis School District 189. In 2017, there were 35 murders. A significant percentage of these murders involved offenders and victims were under the age of 25.

THE SOLUTIONS

Addressing violence requires a coordinated response that draws on the strengths of individuals and institutions from all walks of life. No one entity can solve this problem alone. In adhering to the values and practices of the ESA movement, FIRST STOP calls for a results-based, collaborative approach to addressing youth violence and victimization.

ESA stakeholders acknowledge that the many aspects of a child's life do not occur in isolation. For example, improvement in the social and emotional well-being of a young person may lead to improved academic performance. Each of the strategies in FIRST STOP is linked to an objective, rather than the full range of objectives they may impact. This is due to the complicated nature of mapping the "connectedness" in a plan of this type.

Undergirding this plan is the understanding and commitment to pursuing the following principles:

1. Multi-sector stakeholders must have a generational-focus, commit to the long-term, champion the plan and mobilize the necessary resources.
2. Stakeholders must apply both a racial equity lens and racial equity mirror³ in all aspects of the work
3. Systems and institutions need to be responsive, coordinated, efficient and effective.
4. Significant capacity building is needed for individuals, organizations and systems to improve quality, alignment and impact.
5. Shared measurement systems need to continue being built.
6. Local, state and federal policies must support the well-being of young people.
7. Efforts focused on poverty reduction, community and economic development and workforce development need to be implemented concurrently.

THE PLAN

FIRST STOP is the result of a planning process led by St. Clair County's Chairman Office and United Way of Greater St. Louis. To support the development of the plan, our community received extensive input from young people and partners across the community. FIRST STOP presents a series of goals, objectives, and strategies that were considered to be the most important steps to reduce youth violence and victimization throughout Greater East St. Louis.

³ [*Applying an Equity Mirror to Collective Impact*](#)

BEYOND A PLAN

FIRST STOP is a destination and a call for change.

FIRST STOP is a destination. The name honors and amplifies the voices of our children and youth. Of the 14 sub-goals within the East Side Aligned Roadmap, young people implored adults to make Sub-Goal #3 our community's number one priority. Ensuring *all children and youth feel and are safe* is the first stop of our roadmap.

Sub-Goal #3 of the ESA Roadmap: *All children and youth feel and are safe*

FIRST STOP is a call for change. Across the nation, communities experiencing high-rates of violence often issue a call to 'stop the shootings.' This message is relevant for our footprint. Yet, there are other mindsets, behaviors and actions that our community needs to stop. FIRST STOP calls on our community to:

Stop accepting violence as a norm | Start shifting mindsets

Stop saying violence is someone else's problem | Start assuming responsibility

Stop being punitive | Start being restorative

Stop believing that we can't prevent violence | Start knowing that we can

Stop working in silos | Start building trust and working better together

FIRST STOP VISION

By 2025, all children and youth within Greater East St. Louis feel and are safe.

The goals, strategies, and objectives of FIRST STOP are organized into six core areas that require concurrent implementation. These areas are designated primarily as a way to organize the plan. In practice, they frequently overlap and boundaries between them are artificial. Given the complex nature of the issue, it is important that approaches to address youth violence and victimization are balanced and coordinated across each area.

SIX CORE AREAS

SET THE FOUNDATION – Strategies to sustain a widely-supported movement to improve the safety and well-being of young people over the long-term.

- **Goal 1:** Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization

ADDRESS TRAUMA – Strategies to create trauma-informed, -sensitive and –responsive environments

- **Goal 2:** Every setting in which kids learn and play has well-trained adults applying practices that foster safety, healing and well-being

INVEST IN KIDS – Strategies to stop violence from happening before it ever occurs and help young people thrive

- **Goal 3:** Children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life

CULTIVATE RESIDENT POWER – Strategies to create pipelines and platforms for residents, particularly to young people, to engender self-determination and exercise their leadership and power in addressing structural and systemic issues that breeds violence

- **Goal 4:** Youth and young adults are leading positive change in the community

INTERRUPT AND DETER VIOLENCE – Strategies to effectively intervene at the first sign of risk and when violence occurs

- **Goal 5:** Our community experiences significant reductions in violent incidents

IMPROVE BUILT ENVIRONMENT – Strategies to improve outdoor physical conditions and spur economic development

- **Goal 6:** Neighborhoods are safe to walk, play and live

WE KNOW WHAT IT TAKES TO REDUCE YOUTH VIOLENCE. WE HAVE A ROADMAP. BY IMPLEMENTING FIRST STOP, WE CAN IMPROVE YOUTH SAFETY AND WELL-BEING.

OVERVIEW OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The implementation of FIRST STOP is the shared responsibility of numerous individuals and institutions. All partners share responsibility in aligning their practices, policies and resources with FIRST STOP goals and objectives and in identifying new ways to advance strategies. This section contains a summary of FIRST STOP goals, strategies and objectives and select indicators. More detailed information can be found beginning on page 37.

SET THE FOUNDATION – Strategies to sustain a widely-supported movement to improve the safety and well-being of young people over the long-term. Goal 1: Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization		Measurable Impact
Objective 1.1: Establish and sustain a community-led violence reduction coalition	Increase resident and stakeholder ownership and improve coordination of resources and activities Create strong communication linkages between and among residents, organizations, and other coalitions Generate investment for backbone infrastructure supports and strategy implementation	Sustained community-led violence reduction coalition Increased attraction and leveraging of resources
Objective 1.2: Improve the capacity of data and evaluation systems	Coordinate shared data measurements among partners Provide data collection, management, and analysis training	Greater access and utilization of data for decision-making Increased public understanding about violence
Objective 1.3: Implement a public awareness campaign to elevate the significance of the issue and build public will to act	Implement a FIRST STOP marketing and communications campaign Intentionally educate and engage key stakeholder groups	Increased percentage of youth and families positively affected by policy change
Objective 1.4: Influence policy development, advocacy, and agenda-setting	Review current policies, develop recommendations and advance policies to enhance child well-being Provide advocacy training for stakeholders	Increased feelings of trust and community cohesion
Objective 1.5: Foster healing and reconciliation between individuals, organizations and communities	Integrate community building, healing and reconciliation practices into all aspects of implementation Intentionally apply a racial equity framework	

ADDRESS TRAUMA – Strategies to create trauma-informed, -sensitive and –responsive environments Goal 2: Every setting in which kids learn and play has well-trained adults applying practices that foster safety, healing and well-being		Measurable Impact
Objective 2.1: Increase community’s understanding of and capacity to respond to stress and trauma	Conduct stress and trauma awareness workshops throughout the footprint Provide training on integrating trauma-informed practices Establish trauma-informed learning collaborative	Greater percentage of residents understand the impacts of trauma and toxic stress Increased utilization of trauma-informed practices
Objective 2.2 Improve access, coordination and effectiveness of support services and behavioral health resources	Align, leverage and maximize available support services and ensure quality integration within schools Develop and institute an effective multi-agency intergenerational case management tracking and quality improvement system	Increased number of youth receiving services
INVEST IN KIDS – Strategies to stop violence from happening before it ever occurs and help young people thrive Goal 3: Children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life		Measurable Impact
Objective 3.1 Increase access to quality early learning programs and services	Advance the work of the Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership to strengthen and sustain a high-quality early childhood system	Increased readiness (age and stage)
Objective 3.2 Increase access to quality out-of-school opportunities	Advance the work of the Greater East St. Louis Youth Coordinating Council to strengthen and sustain a high-quality out-of-school time system	Improved academic attendance and performance
Objective 3.3 Increase protective and promotive factors in youth development	Increase the use of social and emotional learning practices Increase the use of restorative practices	Decreased disciplinary referrals Decreased number of youth who had an arrest or delinquent offense
Objective 3.4 Expand youth employment opportunities	Increase investment for youth jobs Strengthen and scale evidence-informed youth employment programs	Improved job readiness skills
Objective 3.5 Enhance support services for parents and families	Prevent family violence through positive parenting programs	Reduced exposure to adverse childhood experiences

CULTIVATE RESIDENT POWER – Strategies to create pipelines and platforms for residents, particularly young people, to engender self-determination and exercise their leadership and power in addressing structural and systemic issues that breeds violence Goal 4: Youth and young adults are leading positive change in the community		Measurable Impact
Objective 4.1 Develop platforms and pipelines for youth to cultivate and exercise their leadership	Provide community organizing training to youth and young adults Provide opportunities for and responsiveness to youth leadership in decision-making and facilitating change	Increased community capacity to reduce violence Increased percentage of neighborhood groups with leading public safety approaches
Objective 4.2 Build the capacity of neighborhood groups to foster cohesion and improve safety	Train residents in community-based approaches to improve safety	Increased number of policy changes informed by youth
INTERRUPT AND DETER VIOLENCE – Strategies to effectively intervene at the first sign of risk and when violence occurs Goal 5: Our community experiences significant reductions in violent incidents		Measurable Impact
Objective 5.1 Implement evidence-based intervention practices	Recruit, train and support community members to interrupt and deescalate violence Reduce recidivism of gun violent offenders	Increase in number of positive interactions between youth and police
Objective 5.2 Implement evidence-based enforcement practices	Expand focused deterrence efforts on the most violent individuals, groups and gangs Coordinate law enforcement efforts across agencies to combat gang violence	Decreased youth violence and victimization Decreased number of gun-related incidents
Objective 5.3 Build the capacity of local law enforcement	Cultivate positive relationships and interactions between youth and law enforcement Integrate the use of community-oriented policing tactics Enhance knowledge and skills of police officers	Decreased number of murders Decreased gang activity Increased local law enforcement capacity

IMPROVE BUILT ENVIRONMENT – Strategies to improve outdoor physical conditions and spur economic development Goal 6: Neighborhoods are safe to walk, play and live		Measurable Impact
Objective 6.1 Increase community and economic development	Build local capacity to develop and implement a community economic development plan Drive neighborhood business growth	Increased economic development activities
Objective 6.2 Improve physical conditions	Expand neighborhood beautification initiatives Repair built environment deficiencies Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	Increased resident feelings of safety at home and in the community Increased sustainability of beautified locations
Objective 6.3 Create safe passages to school	Expand volunteer efforts to monitor routes and chaperon children to and from school Expand school transportation accessibility	Increased number of safe passages to school

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

GEOGRAPHIC AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The East Side Aligned (ESA) footprint spans four municipalities within St. Clair County, Illinois: City of East St. Louis (zip codes 62201 and 62205), Village of Washington Park (62204), Village of Alorton (62207) and the portion of the City of Centreville (62203) within East St. Louis School District 189 (District 189) boundaries.

The footprint was once an industrial leader and job generator in the region. Its central location, access to raw materials and a plentiful, well-trained labor force meant that residents enjoyed the economic health of many post World War II industrialized cities of the Midwestern coal belt. With the shift of heavy industry, businesses relocated away from cities to the suburbs, following technological advancement and white flight. Property values dropped precipitously through the 1970s and 1980s, making it difficult to obtain credit for mortgages or home repairs. Housing deterioration resulted in abandonment of 30 percent of buildings in the 1990s.⁴ Ground lead measures of 10,000 parts per million poisoned local youth, leading to hyperactivity, sleep disorders and in some instances brain damage.⁵ Due to the abandonment of local high sulfur coal resources and the related defection of industry and jobs, the vitality of the footprint waned. Over several decades, the decline continued, eroding both residency and sources of employment. Like many sister cities of this era, decades of divestment took its toll, resulting in large parcels of underutilized ground with sub-standard infrastructure.

Institutionalized and structural racism in policies and practices promote the inequity and segregation of individuals living in the footprint today. The link between racism and violence stretches back to the 1917 East St. Louis race riots, when an estimated 100 Black/African American individuals were murdered at the hands of white individuals. An additional 6,000 Black/African American families were left homeless after fires set by white mobs burned down many structures in the neighborhoods.⁶ The severe trauma to children, families, housing stock and the economic system institutionalized inequity that persists to this day, carrying intergenerational trauma into families, schools, community centers, policies and practices.

From 2015 to 2017, the State of Illinois operated without a budget. A budget was passed after legislators overrode the governor's veto in July 2017. Court orders, federal pass through funding and piecemeal legislation maintained some services during the two years, but the impact of the budget crisis caused critical programs serving people in every corner the of state, including low-income children, seniors and those with disabilities, to shut down.

⁴ Reardon, K. M (2003). Riding the rails for social justice. *National Housing Institute: Shelterforce Online* (128). Retrieved from <http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/128/ridingrails.html>.

⁵ Kozol, J. (1991). Life on the Mississippi: East St. Louis, Illinois. In *Savage Inequalities*. Retrieved from http://web.calstatela.edu/faculty/elipton/Course_Pages/TECH_250/JonKozol.pdf.

⁶ O'Neil, T. (2014). Look back 250: Race hatred, workforce tensions explode in East St. Louis in 1917. *St. Louis Post Dispatch*. Retrieved from http://www.stltoday.com/news/archives/look-back-race-hatred-workforce-tensions-explode-in-east-st/article_9bfa1b5d-c627-5dc7-b1da-6d58993f3ecb.html.

The failure of our elected officials to put people first by carrying out their most fundamental duty – enact a state budget – deeply damaged the foundations of Illinois’ health and human service system, resulting in long-term damage to our state that will take years to repair. Lawmakers’ failure to prevent the 25 percent income tax cuts from taking effect at the beginning of 2016 drained the state of about \$5 billion in annual revenue.⁷ The harm was widespread —afterschool programs, autism services and services for seniors all experienced deep cuts or complete shutdown. As a result, providers that are pillars of the public service delivery system were forced to lay off staff, turn away those in need and shut program doors.⁸ The ESA footprint was significantly impacted by the State of Illinois’ budget impasse. Youth development programs, services for seniors, behavioral health and substance abuse services, supports for teenage mothers, public health services and park and recreation funding have also experienced dramatic cuts resulting in the loss of critical health and human service programs.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Roughly 15 percent of the population in St. Clair County lives in four localities that comprise the District 189 footprint: East St. Louis, Washington Park, Alorton and Centreville. The average age in the four localities is similar to St. Clair County. Each locality in the footprint is similar to St. Clair County overall in that there are slightly more female residents than male residents.⁹

Table 1: Demographics in the Footprint and St. Clair County (2011-2015)

	East St. Louis (62201)	East St. Louis (62205)	Washington Park	Alorton	Centreville	St. Clair County
Population	7,656	8,745	8,503	8,646	7,384	267,029
Median Age	23.8	42.8	34.6	32.7	43.8	37.7
% Under Age 18	43.0	22.1	27.1	30.8	16.5	24.4
% Under Age 5	16.3	6.1	8.2	7.3	4.0	6.5
% Female	57.4	53.2	52.4	53.6	54.6	51.8
% Living Below Poverty Level¹⁰	53.7	37.3	53.1	47.8	28.4	18.2

⁷ Domonoske, C. (2017). Illinois lawmakers override governor, pass budget for 1st time in 2 years. *NPR St. Louis Public Radio*. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/07/06/535811049/illinois-lawmakers-override-governor-pass-budget-for-first-time-in-2-years>.

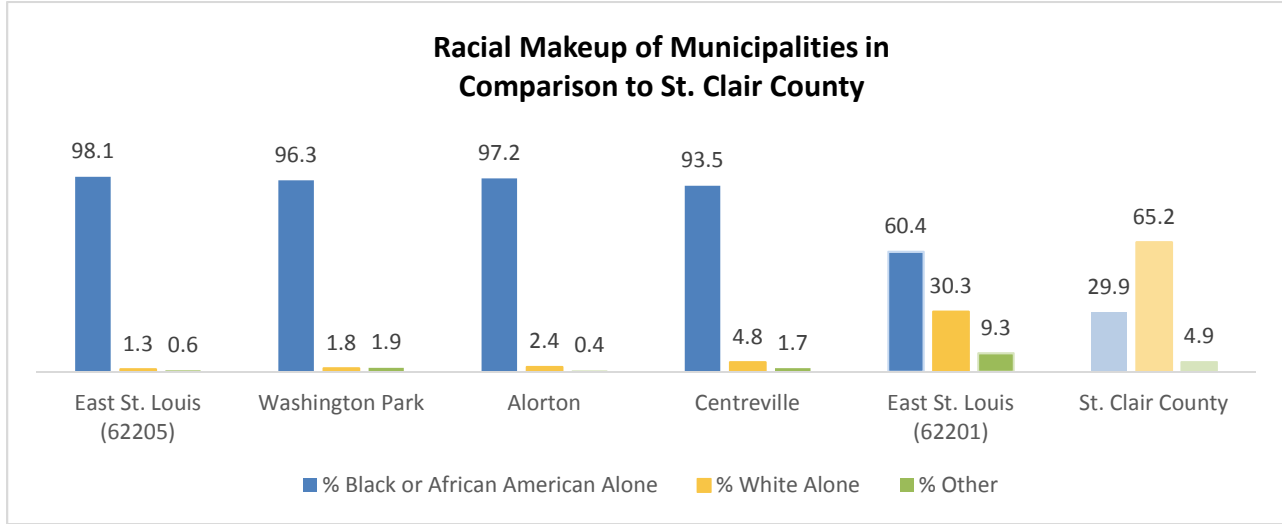
⁸ Fiscal Policy Center. (2016). Budget impasse continues to devastate Illinois children and families. *Voices for Illinois Children*.

⁹ American Fact Finder. ACS demographic and housing estimates. (2015). 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table: DP05. Accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

¹⁰ American Fact Finder. Poverty status in the past 12 months. 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table: S1701. Accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

Over half of the population in Washington Park and East St. Louis in zip code 62201 live in poverty. Nearly a half and over a third of Alorton and East St. Louis zip code 62205 live below the poverty line, respectively. Centerville, with over a quarter of its population in poverty, has ten percent more people living in poverty than St. Clair County as a whole.¹⁰ The great majority of the population in the District 189 footprint is mostly Black/African American while over half of the total St. Clair County population identifies as white.⁹

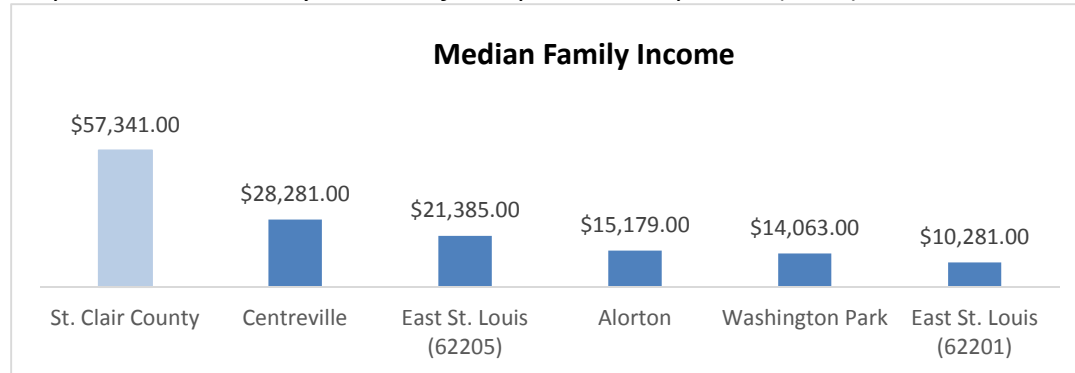
Graph 1: Racial Composition of Footprint Municipalities (2011-2015)⁹ Error! Bookmark not defined.



EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The median family incomes of municipalities in the footprint are significantly lower than the median family income of St. Clair County overall.¹¹

Graph 2: Median Family Income of Footprint Municipalities (2015)¹¹



¹¹ American Fact Finder. Median income in the past 12 months (in 2015 inflation-adjusted dollars). 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table: S1903. Accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov>

Levels of educational attainment for those 25 or older are similar for the footprint and for St. Clair County overall, yet the unemployment rates in most municipalities are higher than the St. Clair County rate overall with the 62201 zip code of East St. Louis as the one exception. Research indicates displacement of industry from majority Black/African American areas resulted significantly higher unemployment rates for Black/African American individuals than white individuals regardless of educational attainment, which is reflective of the history of the Greater East St. Louis area.¹² In addition, Black/African American individuals, who are the clear majority of the footprint, are more likely to be fired during economic downturns regardless of educational attainment.¹³ The relationship between race and employment regardless of educational attainment resonates with the Greater East St. Louis story - the percent of the population in the civilian labor force is lower for all areas in the footprint compared to the rest of St. Clair County.

Table 2: Employment and Economic Development in the Footprint and St. Clair County (2015)

	East St. Louis (62201) (n=7,656)	East St. Louis (62205) (n=8,745)	Washington Park (n=8,503)	Alorton (n=8,646)	Centreville (n=7,384)	St. Clair County (n=267,029)
Unemployment Rate¹⁴	6.5	18.5	17.5	19.0	19.2	8.9
% in Civilian Labor Force¹⁴	50.1	45.9	38.5	50.6	44.8	58.1
% with All Parents in the Workforce¹⁵	55.4	76.0	60.5	63.6	88.4	73.5
Educational Attainment¹⁶						
High School or higher	70.1	79.3	75.0	79.0	84.4	90.3
Bachelor's or higher	5.3	10.2	5.2	9.1	11.0	26.0

¹² Fairlie, R. W. & Sundstrom, W. A. (1999). The emerging, persistence, and recent widening of the racial unemployment gap. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 52(2): 252-270. Retrieved from <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/001979399905200206>.

¹³ Couch, K.A. & Fairlie, R. (2010). Last hired, first fired? Black-white unemployment and the business cycle. *Demography*, 47(1): 227-247. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3000014/>.

¹⁴ American Fact Finder. Selected economic characteristics. (2015). 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table: DP03. Accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

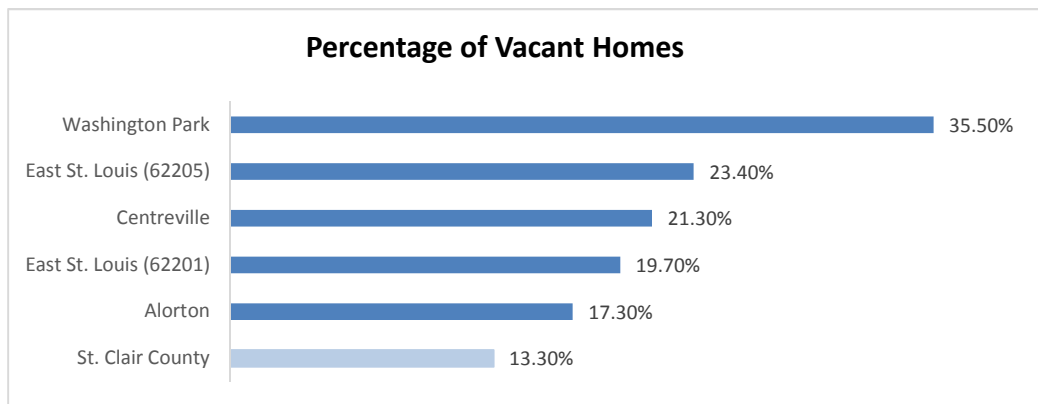
¹⁵ American Fact Finder. Employment characteristics of families. (2015). 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table: S2302. Accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

¹⁶ American Fact Finder. Educational Attainment. (2015). 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table: S1501. Accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Housing stock in the footprint overlaps with vacancy, unaffordability, environmental risk and exposure to violence. The proportion of vacant homes in Washington Park is three times higher than St. Clair County.¹⁷

Graph 3: Percentage of Vacant Homes (2015)¹⁷



Widespread vacancy and divestment depresses the market value of homes in the District 189 footprint. The median home costs roughly \$120,400 in St. Clair County, which is nearly four times higher than the median Alorton home that costs \$33,000. The median St. Clair County home is over 2.5 times more valuable than median of \$45,600 in Washington Park and \$49,600 in Centreville. The East St. Louis median home value of \$56,100 about half as valuable as the median St. Clair County home.¹⁷ Over half of East St. Louis residents are burdened by housing costs, as compared to nearly one third of St. Clair County residents. Housing cost burden was not available for the remaining District 189 municipalities.¹⁸

Public Housing

East St. Louis Housing Authority (ESLHA) oversees and supports the over 4,000 people living in public housing in East St. Louis. ESLHA was under a Department of Housing and Urban Development receivership for 32 years.¹⁹ Control and oversight of ESLHA was recently returned to the City of East St. Louis. The main public housing projects are: John De Shields, Roosevelt Homes, Samuel Gompers Homes, Orr Weathers High Rise, Roman Owens, Lansdowne Towers and Villa Griffin. **These public housing complexes are home to over half of all public housing residents.**

¹⁷ American Fact Finder. Selected Housing Characteristics. (2015). 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Table: DP04. Accessed at <https://factfinder.census.gov>.

¹⁸ Affordable Housing Online. Affordable Housing in East St. Louis. (2015). Retrieved October 2017 from <https://affordablehousingonline.com/affordable-housing-data# census>

¹⁹ Receiverships. (n.d.). In HUD.gov: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Retrieved November 27, 2016, from http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/oro/receiverships.

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

The footprint has long been known for its extreme poverty and crime which have had lasting, negative effects on residents. In St. Clair County, roughly 30 people out of 1,000 will experience crime, which is about equivalent to the crime rate for Alorton. East St. Louis crime rate is far higher, with 64 out of 1,000 people experiencing crime. The crime rates for Washington Park and Centreville are 55 and 59 per 1,000 people, respectively.²⁰

Touchette Regional Hospital saw a slight decrease in stabbing victimization between 2015 and 2016 for those 25 years or older, with 31 patients presenting with stab wounds in 2015 in comparison to 29 in 2016. There were 15 patients who were 24 years or younger that presented with stab wounds in 2016, a slight increase from the 11 patients in 2015. Patients 25 years or older presenting with gunshot wounds was significantly lower in 2016, with only 8 patients while 2015 saw 26 patients. For those 24 years and under, there were 4 victims of gunshot wounds in 2016, an increase from 8 victims in 2015. Lower numbers may also be attributed to patients seeking care at other regional hospitals, including Barnes Jewish Hospital and St. Louis University Hospital in St. Louis, both well-regarded for care after trauma. While the number of victims 25 years and older appears to be decreasing, youth who are 24 years or younger are at increasing risk of victimization.²¹

Table 3: Crime by Municipality (2011-2015)²²

Year	Crime	East St. Louis (n=8,745 in 62205) (n=7,656 in 62201)	Washington Park (n=8,503)	Alorton (n=8,646)	Centreville (n=7,384)	Total
2011	Homicides	30	7	0	3	40
2012	Homicides	22	2	1	1	26
2013	Homicides	23	2	1	0	26
2014	Homicides	25	4	1	0	30
2015	Homicides	19	1	0	0	20
2015	Armed robberies and robberies	117	19	7	10	153
2015	Aggravated batteries	154	50	21	69	294
2015	Vehicle thefts, aggravated hijackings or hijackings	31	18	0	27	76

²⁰ Illinois State Police. (2015). Index Crime and Crime Rate Data. 2015 Annual Uniform Crime Report. Retrieved from http://www.isp.state.il.us/docs/cii/cii15/cii15_SectionI_Pg11_to_244.pdf

²¹ Touchette Regional Hospital. (2016). Touchette Regional Hospital shared aggregated patient data for 2015 and 2016. Retrieved August 2017.

²² East Side Aligned. (n.d.) East Side Aligned previously received data from local law enforcement.

School Safety and Exposure to Violence

Ongoing exposure to traumatic and unsafe environments severely impacts the ability of youth to be healthy and ready to learn. Trauma such as domestic violence, dating violence, incarceration of parents and sexual assault by extended family or family friends are common challenges facing many District 189 families.

District 189 students experience more violence than the average Illinois student. Rates of dating violence (i.e., punched, hit, or threatened) are also higher for students in the footprint than in Illinois overall. **More District 189 students report not feeling safe in school than those who report feeling unsafe in their neighborhoods.** Rates of ever being bullied (threatened, insulted, physically assaulted, or cyber-bullied) are similar in District 189 and in Illinois overall. **However, rates of intense bullying are higher in District 189, particularly in high school.** ⁴³ Table 4 provides additional details regarding student feelings of safety and security at school.

Table 4: School Environment in District 189 and Illinois (2016)⁴³

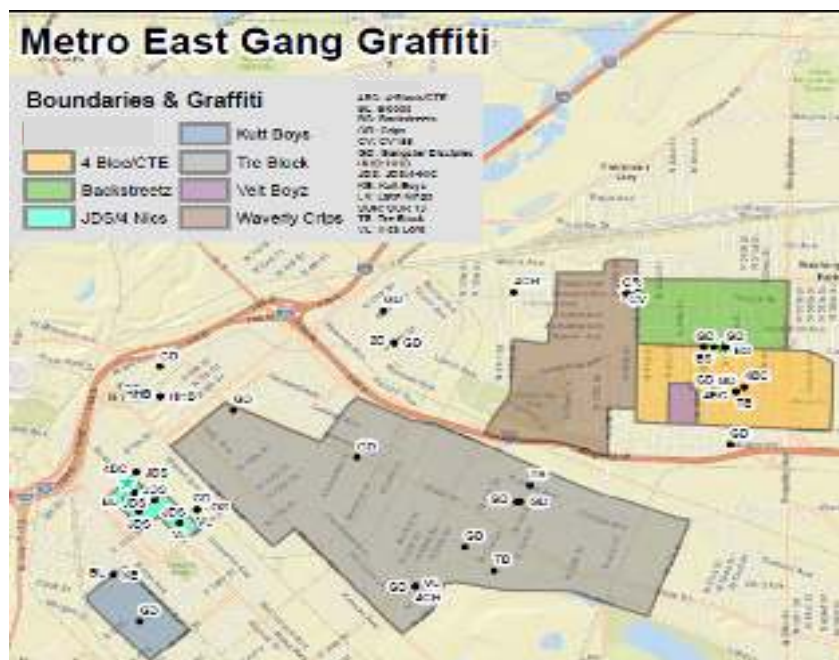
	District 189	Illinois
Rating of Teachers Caring (4-point scale)		
8 th grade	2.7	3.0
10 th grade	2.4	2.8
12 th grade	2.6	2.9
% Experience Dating Violence		
8 th grade	16	5
10 th grade	11	7
12 th grade	10	8
% Do Not Feel Safe at School		
8 th grade	18	Data not available
10 th grade	41	
12 th grade	28	
% Feel Unsafe in Their Neighborhood		
8 th grade	24	Data not available
10 th grade	22	
12 th grade	16	
% Ever Been Bullied		
8 th grade	46	47
10 th grade	32	35
12 th grade	17	27
% Experience Intense Bullying		
8 th grade	8	7
10 th grade	8	4
12 th grade	9	5

Gang Activity

The Metro East Police Assistance Team, a group from the Illinois State Police assigned to combat violent crime within the footprint, estimates that over the past 5 years, approximately 80 percent of murders were linked to gang activity, underscoring its highly significant role as a crime driver in the area. These gangs, estimated to total 200 members, are described as "hybrid gangs" because they lack the clear power structures and hierarchies of traditional gangs. ESA's "hot spots" are predominately associated with gang territories.²³ Due to limited police department capacity, explicit information regarding gang violence is not available.

As of February 2016, there were 14 active gangs in the Greater East St. Louis area.²³ One of the most active gangs is JDS/4N, which has 25 active members and 20 to 30 affiliate members. Tre Block is another highly active gang with 15 active members and 10 affiliate members. Gangster Disciples has 30 active members and at least 40 affiliate members. Kutt Boys is also highly active with 20 active members and 10 affiliate members.²⁴

Map 1: Metro East Gang Graffiti (2016)²³



The gangs operate in 14 hotspots, several of which include public housing projects: Norman Owens Homes, Orr Weathers High Rise, Samuel Gompers Homes and Roosevelt Homes.²³ Gang activity around housing projects which house over 4,000 residents puts adults and youth at increased risk of involvement in gangs and/or violent victimization.²⁵

²³ Illinois State Police. (2016). MetroEast Gang Maps. Data provided by Illinois State Police. Retrieved Aug 2017.

²⁴ Illinois State Police. (2017). Gangs and Gang Area List. Data provided by Illinois State Police. Retrieved Aug 2017.

²⁵ East St. Louis Housing Authority. (2017). Data provided by East St. Louis Housing Authority. Retrieved Sept. 2017.

Safety in Public Housing

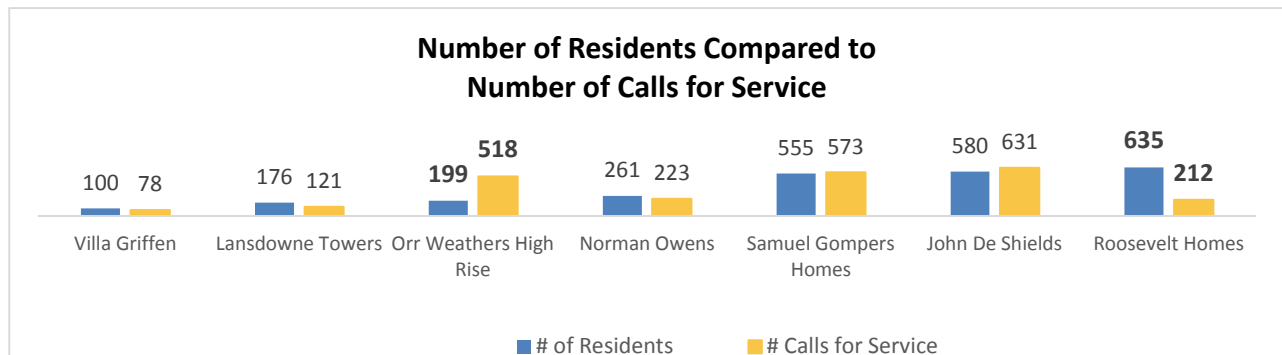
The public housing projects have public safety officers that are separate from the East St. Louis police department. The public safety division can be called by residents for service, including response to property infractions or interpersonal disputes. The most common call for service across all housing projects was to respond to a disturbance, which was called in 366 times.²⁶ Table 5 includes all calls for service that have been requested over 50 times.

Table 5: Number and Types of Calls for Service at Public Housing Developments (2015-2016)²⁶

Type of Call for Service	Number of Calls
Disturbance	366
Subject removal	201
Residential burglary	124
Leads	123
Shots fired	102
Criminal damage to a vehicle	85
Public assistance	80
Fight in progress	70
Criminal damage to property	69
Follow up from previous call	66
Juvenile problem	55
Stolen vehicles	52

Residents of the public housing projects made a total of 2,355 calls for service between March 2015 and April 2016. Graph 4 compares the number of residents in each housing project to the number of calls for service per housing project. Orr Weathers High Rise has over 300 more calls for service than residents, indicating significant unrest and lack of safety. Alternatively the very few calls in comparison to residents in Roosevelt Homes may indicate a lack of trust of public safety officers, leaving protection to informal networks such as gangs.²⁶

Graph 4: Comparison of Number of Residents to Number of Calls for Service (2015-2016)²⁶



²⁶ East St. Louis Housing Authority. (March 2015 – April 2016). Data provided by East St. Louis Housing Authority. Retrieved September 2017.

Domestic Violence

Touchette saw twice as many cases of domestic violence in 2016 than 2015, with 227 cases in 2016 and 112 cases in 2015. Domestic violence is significantly underreported by residents in the District 189 localities. Nearly 600 cases of domestic violence were reported in St. Clair County in 2015.²⁷ There is currently insufficient data to provide a full picture of this issue.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Local law enforcement and social service providers have anecdotally indicated that physical abuse is interwoven into family cultures in which children view it as the norm. In the southern region of Illinois, where the municipalities are located, nearly 60 percent of child welfare reports are made to report abuse. Nearly 30 percent are to report neglect, while over 10 percent are made to report both abuse and neglect. St. Clair County in 2015 reported a higher rate of reporting for child abuse and neglect than Illinois, but has a slightly reduced rate of indicated victims. St. Clair County unfortunately reported higher rates of indicated victims of sexual abuse than Illinois.²⁸

Table 6: Reported and Indicated Child Abuse and Neglect (2015)²⁸Error! Bookmark not defined.

	St. Clair County (n=267,029)	Illinois (n=12,873,761)Error! B ookmark not defined.
Rate of Children Reported as Abused or Neglected (Per 1,000)	41.1	30
Rate of Indicated Child Victims of Abuse or Neglect (Per 1,000)	9.4	9.8
Rate of Alleged Victims of Child Sexual Abuse (Per 1,000)	3.2	2.3
Rate of Indicated Victims of Child Sexual Abuse (Per 1,000)	0.64	0.63

Of the child abuse and neglect reports in 2016, an average of 10 children out of 1,000 were indicated in St. Clair County. District 189 municipalities experienced rates significantly higher than the county. Out of 1,000 children in Centreville in 2016, roughly 33 would be indicated for abuse and/or neglect. East St. Louis zip code 62201 saw rates of nearly 25 children per 1000, while roughly 20 children per 1000 were indicated in 62205. Washington Park and Alorton rates in 2016 were roughly 23 and 11 per 1000, respectively.²⁸

²⁷ Touchette Regional Hospital. (2016). Touchette Regional Hospital shared aggregated patient data for 2015 and 2016. Retrieved August 2017.

²⁸ Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. (2015). Child Abuse and Neglect Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.illinois.gov/dcf/aboutus/newsandreports/Documents/DCFS_Annual_Statistical_Report_FY2015.pdf

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement capacity in the footprint is insufficient. The East St. Louis police department has 43 officers, 7 of whom are on leave and only 16 of whom are assigned to the patrol division. According to the national standard, East St. Louis should have at least 62 officers. When taking into account the crime rate, the necessary number of police officers in East St. Louis spikes to 173.^{29,30,31} The Metro East Police District Commission, established in 2013, includes representation from East St. Louis, Washington Park, Alorton and Brooklyn, a small adjacent community. Establishment of the Metro East Police District Commission brought much-needed training and policy change, but no new dollars to hire more officers. When dollars are available to hire new officers, departments struggle to find quality candidates able to pass required tests.³¹ The current law enforcement capacity makes it impossible to adequately respond to the crime epidemic. **There were 757 reported violent crimes in 2016 – more than any city in the State of Illinois.**³⁰ The overwhelming size of reported violent crime problem coupled with the lack of law enforcement resources leads to chronic underreporting of incidents of crime. In November 2014, over half of those cases were unsolved.³²

Metro East Police District Commission communities were the subject of research by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Program's Diagnostic Center in 2013. For each full-time police officer in East St. Louis, there were 45 Part I violent crimes, which includes homicide, rape, robbery, and assault. Alorton had roughly the same number of Part I crimes per full-time officer, while Washington Park had over 70. A neighboring community in St. Clair County, Fairview Heights, reported roughly one Part I violent crime per full-time officer, and budgeted over \$40,000 per average Part I crime. East St. Louis and Alorton budgets were equal to roughly 6 percent of the Fairview Heights budget for a Part I crime. The Washington Park budget was nearly 5 percent of the Fairview Heights budget.³³

The budget strain extended beyond allocations for response to specific crimes. Alorton could afford to pay roughly \$50,000 less and East St. Louis paid nearly \$60,000 less per full time officer than Fairview Heights. **Washington Park budgeted around \$114,000 less than Fairview Heights for full-time officers.** Police departments within the District 189 footprint had drastically lower budgets per resident than neighboring communities. East St. Louis and Alorton spent \$201 and \$187 per resident, respectively. Washington Park spent nearly half of the other footprint localities. Fairview Heights spent over quadruple what Washington Park spent, and nearly double what East St. Louis and Alorton spent with \$426 budgeted per resident.³³

²⁹ Violent Crime Task Force. (2016). Violent Crime Task Force Meeting January 19, 2016.

³⁰ Gauen, P. (2017). Gauen: The problem of too few Est. St. Louis cops is obvious; answer is not. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Retrieved from http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/illinois/gauen-problem-of-too-few-east-st-louis-cops-is/article_a074cbc8-5514-5fed-975e-4546f5ce04b4.html

³¹ Smith, C. P. (2017). East St. Louis has more crime in the metro-east. So why does it have fewer police officers? Retrieved from <http://www.bnd.com/news/local/article179317371.html#appvid=A813D805-9277-492D-9A0D-86C425626630>

³² Illinois General Assembly. (2014). Retrieved September 2017.

³³ OJP Diagnostic Center. (2014). Site Visit Debrief and Next Steps, Metro East Police District Commission (MEPDC). Retrieved from https://www.ojpdagnosticcenter.org/sites/default/files/spotlight/download/MEPDC_Post-Site%20Visit%20Debrief.pdf.

Financial strain and overwork were additionally complicated by a history of corruption within the police departments. Out of the 75 federal and state cases prosecuting police corruption, police departments within the District 189 footprint accounted for 60 percent of the cases.²² The diagnostic assessment did not include the City of Centreville and, therefore, data is not available for this analysis.

Table 7: Community Violence in the Footprint and St. Clair County (2013)^{33 33}

	East St. Louis (n=23,139 in 62205, n=7,547 in 62201)	Washington Park (n=4,169)	Alorton (n=2,002)	Centreville (n=5,309)	Fairview Heights (n=16,686)Error! Bookmark not defined.
Average Budget per Part I Crime	\$2,500	\$1,900	\$2,500	N/A	\$40,000
Average Budget per Full Time Officer	\$114,119	\$58,247	\$122,312	N/A	\$172,337
Spending per Resident	\$201	\$99	\$187	N/A	\$426

JUVENILE JUSTICE

The Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission reported that statewide in 2015, 26 percent of juvenile arrests were related to crimes against people, while 30 percent and 10 percent were related to property crimes and drug crimes, respectively. Illinois youth who committed crimes against people accounted for 26 percent of admissions to detention facilities in 2015. Youth with a warrant accounted for nearly 30 percent of detention admissions, while property crimes accounted for roughly 20 percent.³⁴ At this time, zip code level data is not readily available.

Table 8: Number of Juvenile Justice-Involved Youth in St. Clair County (2015-2016)³⁵

	St. Clair County (n=267,029)
Court Referrals	672
Diversions	110
Petitions	390
Delinquency Adjudications	181
Continuance Under Supervision	43
Probations	169
Transfer to Adult Court	4

³⁴ Gleicher, L. (2017). Juvenile Justice in Illinois, 2015. *Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission*. Chicago, IL: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

³⁵ St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Commission. (2016). Data reported in compliance with Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission reporting requirements. Retrieved August 2017.

CHILD AND YOUTH READINESS AND WELL-BEING

Early Childhood

Early childhood is a critical phase of human development. Centreville currently has enough quality/accredited early childhood programs to serve nearly 52 percent of youth. At the county level, only 40 percent of youth can be served by an accredited program. Alorton is only able to serve roughly 37 percent of youth in a quality program. East St. Louis can serve roughly 20 percent of their youth, while only 11 percent of Washington Park youth could be served by an accredited program.³⁶

While there may be some limited capacity within the footprint, the majority of age-eligible children do not have access. Based on a community needs assessment conducted by Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville Head Start, approximately 40 percent of children birth to five do not attend a licensed child care center, and instead are cared for by family, friends, and neighbors who offer the lowest level of quality and simulation to promote optimum growth and development. Less than 50 percent of children aged 0-5 are served by licensed childcare providers. Only 20 percent of children are ready for kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers consistently state that the first few months of Kindergarten are spent catching up those students who haven't learned how to "do school" with less of a focus being paid to those students who are ready.

The Erickson Institute, an early childhood research center and graduate school based out of Chicago, IL, conducted an assessment of social-emotional vulnerability and readiness for kindergarteners throughout the footprint. The assessment was conducted from late 2016 to early 2017. Social-emotional domains included physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development and communication skills and general knowledge. Youth who tested in the bottom 10 percent of a domain were identified as vulnerable for that domain.

Fewer East St. Louis youth are socio-emotionally on track, with 59 percent at-risk or vulnerable. Over half of Washington Park youth are vulnerable on at least one domain, and only 15 percent are developmentally on track for all domains. Over a third of Alorton youth are developmentally at-risk on at least one domain, but roughly 41 percent are on track. Slightly over a third of Centreville youth were identified as vulnerable on one or more domain, while just slightly under a third are developmentally on-track for all domains. **Social competence with peers was low for all municipalities.** The limited social competence is further complicated by the significant prevalence of aggressive behavior throughout all municipalities, indicating low social maturity.³⁷

³⁶ Children's Home + Aid. (2017). Data provided by Children's Home + Aid. Retrieved September 2017.

³⁷ Erikson Institute. (2017). Early Development Instrument (EDI) table book: East St. Louis, Illinois.

Table 9: Emotional Wellness in the Four Municipalities of District 189 (2017)³⁷

	East St. Louis (n=8,745 in 62205) (n=7,656 in 62201)	Washington Park (n=8,503)	Alorton (n=8,646)	Centreville (n=7,384)
Socio-Emotional Vulnerability and Readiness				
% On-Track	41	54	41	32
% At Risk	28	31	35	32
% Vulnerable	31	15	24	36
% Socially Competent	23	8	35	21
% Aggressive Behavior	71	54	71	71

K-12 Experience

Students in District 189 face more financial hardship than Illinois students overall. In District 189, 98.8 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch, while only 50.0 percent Illinois students overall are eligible for free or reduced lunch. In District 189, 7 percent of students are homeless compared to the 2 percent of students that are homeless in Illinois overall.^{38,39}

Only 40 percent of students enter Kindergarten at or above grade-level in reading and math (as assessed by the nationally-normed Northwest Education Assessment), and only two in five students enter Kindergarten with the necessary social, emotional, and classroom skills to be successful in Kindergarten in the first month of school (as measured by parent and teacher survey data). **Error! Bookmark not defined. Only 5.3 percent of graduating District 189 students tested as ready for college work versus a statewide average of 45.6 percent in 2015.** In 2015, less than 1 in 5 elementary and middle school students within District 189 met reading standards; only 5 percent of high school students were college ready; and the district reported a 74 percent high school graduation rate.⁴⁰

The school district uses a tiered system, known as the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to identify students who need additional supports to be successful in school. MTSS is a coherent continuum of evidence-based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs. It includes frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making and uses the Response to Intervention (RTI) system that allows students who are experiencing difficulty learning to receive interventions in the general education setting. RTI has three levels of tiered intervention with the goal being to provide the academic and behavioral interventions that will allow a student to be successful in Tier 1. **The District**

³⁸ East St. Louis School District 189. (2016). District 189 school district administrators provided aggregate student data. Retrieved July 2017.

³⁹ Illinois State Board of Education. (2016). Illinois Report Card 2015-2016. Retrieved from <https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/State.aspx?source=studentcharacteristics&Stateid=IL>

⁴⁰ Illinois State Board of Education. (2016). East St. Louis SD 189 2015-2016.

reports that in the 2015-2016 school year at Dunbar Elementary School, 413 of the 486 students enrolled were classified as needing significant supports to be successful (Tier 2 or Tier 3). In fact, 103 students were classified as Tier 2 (in the mid-range), and 310 were Tier 3 students (needing significant supports). Gordon Bush Elementary School reported that approximately 85 percent of all children enrolled in our target area elementary schools require significant levels of additional support to enable them to be successful; children in middle school and high school have similar needs **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

District 189 has more students to manage per classroom than the average teacher across the state. There are 28 students per teacher in District 189 compared to a ratio of 19 students to one teacher in Illinois overall.^{39,40} Students across Illinois were asked in 2016 if there are teachers or other adults at school that really care about them, notice if they are not there, listen when they have something to say, or notice if they are having trouble learning something. **District 189 students are less likely to perceive teachers and other adults at their school as caring compared to other students in Illinois. See Table 11 on page 15.**

Youth Social-Emotional Wellness

Exposure to violence, including family and community violence, has detrimental effects on child development with serious and long-lasting consequences for children's physical and mental health.⁴¹ Exposure to violence causes symptoms of depression and anxiety, aggressive behaviors and negative social and education outcomes.⁴² Socioeconomic status and family structure are risk factors for exposure to violence. The high prevalence of poverty and single family homes in the footprint puts youth at higher risk for exposure. Additional risk factors include inadequate systems to support community structure, poor performing schools and high rates of poverty. There are higher rates of depression in District 189 for eighth and tenth graders than in the rest of Illinois. For twelfth graders, the trend reverses with a higher percentage of students statewide experiencing depression than District 189 students.⁴³

Table 10: Student Depression in District 189 and Illinois (2016)⁴³

	District 189	Illinois
% Experiencing Depression		
8th grade	33	28
10th grade	40	31
12th grade	19	29

⁴¹ Holt, MK, Finkelhor, D, Kauffman-Kantor, G. Multiple victimization experiences of urban elementary school students. Associations with psychosocial functioning and academic performance. Child Abuse and Neglect, 2007; 31 (5); 503-15.

⁴² Foster, Holly, Brooks-Gunn, Jeanne. Effects of Physical Family and Community Violence on Child Development. Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, October 2011.

⁴³ Center for Prevention and Research Development, University of Illinois. (2016). Illinois youth survey 2016 district report: East St. Louis SD 189. Illinois Department of Human Services.

Out-Of-School Time

Research shows that quality out-of-school time (OST) programs benefit young people academically, socially and emotionally.⁴⁴ In January of 2015, the Greater East St. Louis Youth Coordinating Council (YCC), a coalition of seven OST providers, conducted an assessment of their current programming, which inventoried data on the number of kids served (broken down by age and geography), type and frequency of programs offered, staff capacity, current evaluation tools used and other key program components. Data showed that less than one-third of school-aged youth living within the footprint were regularly participating in OST programs.

Nutritional Access

The District 189 footprint is a known food desert. In St. Clair County in 2012, there were roughly 16 grocery stores per 100,000 people. Liquor stores outnumbered available healthy food in the footprint. In 2012, nearly 5 liquor stores per 100,000 people exist in St. Clair County. St. Clair County residents were at higher risk of going hungry in the same year with nearly 17 percent of people experiencing food insecurity in comparison to 14 percent statewide. Coupled with high rates of poverty, healthy food options become inaccessible.

Outdoor Environment and Physical Activity

Municipalities within the District 189 footprint have several parks available. East St. Louis has 8 parks and Alorton has 2 parks, while Washington Park and Centreville have one park each.⁴⁵ While a number of recreation and park amenities have been identified in the area, maintenance and care have been challenges. Options for indoor physical activity were limited with only 10 recreation facilities available per 100,000 people in St. Clair County, as of 2011. Unfortunately, this is not far from the state average of 9 facilities per 100,000 people. The lack of quality lighting keeps East St. Louis residents, particularly senior citizens, from leaving their homes in the evenings. Residents report that it is too dark to walk or drive without fear of being victim to a crime.³¹

The safety, security, and accessibility of community resources is limited for residents in the District 189 footprint due to widespread gang activity that includes the public housing many call home. Spaces for public gathering are marred by gang activity and proximity due to limited public parks. With limited healthy food options and exposure to air pollutants, residents have little option but to breathe and eat that which risks their health and well-being.

⁴⁴ Browne, D. (2015). Growing together, learning together: What cities have discovered about building afterschool systems. New York, NY: Wallace Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Growing-Together-Learning-Together.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Metro East Park and Recreation District. (2017). Metro East Park and Recreation District's Park Map. Retrieved October 2017 from <https://www.meprd.org/park-map/>

ASSETS

Geography

The Mississippi River frontage for the Greater East St. Louis area provides desirable land for both residential and commercial development, evidenced by on-going commitment and expansion of Casino Queen, agricultural commodity transportation infrastructure, and residential development planning. St. Louis City and County, major employment hubs for the region, are made accessible by the MetroLink light rail public transportation system.

Economic and Neighborhood Development

Small-scale neighborhood revitalization efforts provide place-based investments in affordable housing, financial well-being, and cultural engagement. Mt. Sinai Development Corp. is one key asset leading revitalization efforts in the Winstanley neighborhood, with a vision to scale development of homes, commercial areas and green-space. To date, 60 homes have been developed with 100 more to come. Financial institutions are also demonstrating their commitment to the footprint. Recently, Associated Bank spent \$750,000 renovating their East St. Louis branch. Another bank, Regions, built a new facility in the footprint within the last 5 years. The community is rich with cultural history and emerging amenities, such as the Katherine Dunham Museum, and efforts are underway to restore the home of Miles Davis.

School Progress

District 189 Established new and expanded existing dual credit and dual enrollment programs, increased merit-based scholarships from \$450,000 in 2014 to \$4.1 million in 2015 and increased freshmen on-track rate from 72 percent to 90 percent.

Since August 2015, the School Turnaround Office (STO) championed the implementation of restorative practices. STO is a department that was established to implement innovative, data-driven strategies within the School Transformation Zone, which is a small cohort of schools within the district that received three-year School Improvement Grants (SIG).⁴⁶ Implementation included training of some staff by practitioners from the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIFP). IIFP emphasized the need for schools to embrace a high pressure, high support organizational structure to ensure that restorative practices fostered a collaborative culture and supportive climate within schools.⁴⁷ The change in disciplinary policy in District 189 has shown promising results. At the end of the 2015-16 school year, District 189 saw a 12 percent reduction in district-wide out-of-school suspensions. The decline was even more significant in secondary schools, which saw a 43 percent decrease in out-of-school suspensions.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ East St. Louis School District 189. (n.d.). *Office of school turnaround*. Retrieved from <https://www.estl189.com/Domain/49>.

⁴⁷ Costello, B., Wachtel, J. & Watchtel T. (2009). *The restorative practices handbook for teachers, disciplinarians and administrators*. Bethlehem, PA: International Institute for Restorative Practices.

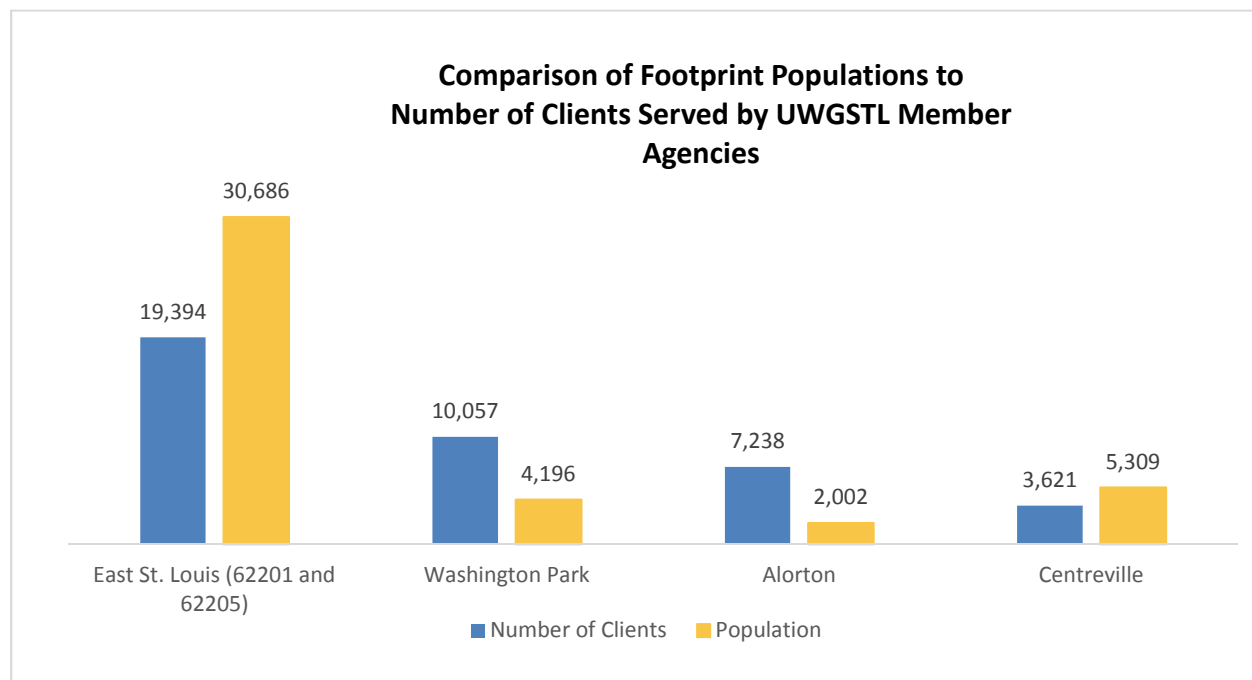
⁴⁸ East St. Louis School District 189. (n.d.). *Restorative practices*. Retrieved from <https://www.estl189.com/domain/96>.

Community Investment

United Way of Greater St. Louis (UWGSL) has worked in partnership with agencies, communities, business, labor and government since 1922 to help people and strengthen the St. Louis region. UWGSL has extensive experience in capacity building, issue coordination and alignment, outcomes management and grant management. UWGSL was selected as ESA's backbone because of a demonstrated success in mobilizing relevant stakeholders to address pressing and complex community issues. UWGSL not only provides backbone support to the movement, but significantly invests in local nonprofits. There are 82 UWGSL-funded agencies that serve over 40,000 clients in the District 189 footprint. **The total amount UWGSL invested into agencies within the footprint in 2016 amounts to nearly \$2 million.**⁴⁹

Graph 5 compares the number of clients in each municipality served by UWGSL-funded agencies. Washington Park and Alorton have more clients served by agencies than residents. This may indicate the importance of social service connection to resident livelihood. Many agencies connected to ESA are invested not only with funds, but with training.⁵⁰

Graph 5: Comparison of Footprint Population to Number of Clients Served by UWGSTL Member Agencies (2017)⁴⁹



The commitment of residents and stakeholders to a shared agenda for progress has attracted investment that builds ESA capacity to ensure a safe and thriving community. ESA was designated Promise Zone Finalist by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

⁴⁹ United Way of Greater St. Louis. (2016). East St. Louis investment data by zip code. Retrieved September 2017.

⁵⁰ East Side Aligned. (2017). Notes from observed meeting of Greater East St. Louis service and technical assistance providers. Retrieved September 2017.

ESA was recently awarded a Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Program grant of nearly \$1 million to advance public safety, law enforcement capacity and community development. The funding and technical support provided through the BCJI Program will better position us to more strategically and effectively address our violent crime issues.

Confidence in ESA by the corporate community has also been building, as demonstrated by a \$200,000 investment by a local energy company to assist efforts to strengthen law enforcement accountability and improve public safety. GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), a national pharmaceutical company, awarded ESA with a \$500,000 grant to build an integrated out-of-school time system to increase program quality and serve more kids.

Systems Alignment and Community Engagement

ESA originated from a combination of new leadership and critical reflection on the escalating disparities in social determinants of health for local youth. Longstanding nonprofit leaders acknowledged that while they had positively impacted the lives of many, population-level outcomes were not changing and, in some instances, getting worse. As leaders began to explore how to shift approaches, District 189's newly appointed superintendent arrived determined "not to allow a child's zip code to determine their destiny," and convened a meeting of stakeholders to discuss the need for a more coordinated, comprehensive service-delivery system to meet the overwhelming needs of students and families. In a groundbreaking move, local nonprofits, city government, foundations, and school district pooled funding to initiate the collective impact process.

Since its founding four years ago, ESA has garnered the support and commitment of system leaders within education, healthcare, government, economic development, law enforcement, nonprofit and business leaders, neighborhood associations, faith communities, and youth. Its purpose is to align policy, practice, and investment to achieve the 2025 goals of all children and youth being healthy and safe in their environments; socially connected and emotionally secure; successful in school, college, and work; and positively engaged in their community.

The ESA movement includes over 80 stakeholder organizations. Inclusion of residents as leaders and decision makers is a necessary condition and foundational value of ESA. Its stakeholders firmly believe that no collective impact effort can be sustained without significant investment in the human capital of residents. Current and former residents represent over 50 percent of the members of ESA's overarching leadership council and committees. ESA's cross-sector Alignment Council provides oversight leverages existing and new resources to ensure the successful development and implementation of committee activities, including the development and implementation of the youth violence reduction plan.

VALUES, PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORK

East Side Aligned is a movement to improve the readiness and well-being of children and youth within the greater East St. Louis area. It brings together residents, particularly youth, and systems leaders and practitioners—within education, human services, healthcare, government, economic development, law enforcement and business—to collectively and boldly address racial, structural and systemic inequities.

The ESA movement works to align and advance policy, practice and investment. Stakeholders apply this “tripod lens” in everything they do.

In 2016, stakeholders developed the following “Guiding Principles for Readiness and Well-Being.” These guiding principles serve as a call to action in terms of whose voices should be elevated, how resources should be allocated (i.e. comprehensive staff development and equitable wages) and what our community needs to be held accountable to.

East Side Aligned: Guiding Principles for Readiness and Well-Being

Every young person in Greater East St. Louis has the right to be ready and well for school, work and life. Coordinated investment in children and youth, the adults they engage with and the systems and settings they interact with is required to create change. Readiness and well-being will be achieved when:

- *Children and youth have authentic voice and leadership in shaping the policies, practices and investments that affect them;*
- *Children and youth have a continuum of high-quality programs, services and opportunities to support their readiness and well-being;*
- *Parents and caregivers are well-equipped, supported and engaged in fostering readiness and well-being for their children;*
- *Adults who serve children and youth are also well-trained, well-supported and effectively supervised; and*
- *Systems and institutions are responsive, coordinated, efficient and effective in supporting readiness and well-being.*

In addition to the guiding principles, the ESA movement seeks to live out its core values.

The core values, guiding principles and “tripod lens” are the foundation of ESA’s work to advance racial equity and improve the readiness and well-being of children and youth within Greater East St. Louis.

CORE VALUES

Cultivate Trust. *Persist together*

Empower Everyone. *Apply all our strengths*

Pursue Understanding. *Know the what and how*

Facilitate Change. *Be and do better*

Conditions of Collective Impact

The ESA movement was built around the five conditions of collective impact:



All participants have a **shared vision for change** including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions

Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable

Participant activities must be **differentiated while still being coordinated** through a mutually reinforcing plan of action

Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation

Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to **serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies**

ABLE Change Framework

ESA stakeholders will be intentionally using the ABLe Change framework and tools to support throughout implementation. The ABLe Change Framework, developed by Michigan State University, is a systems change approach designed to help communities more effectively address significant social issues affecting children, youth and families. The model is based upon that premise that communities can achieve transformative results when they make local system and community conditions the intentional targets of their change initiatives, when they pursue the effective implementation of their efforts, and when they build a community engagement infrastructure that supports real-time learning and action across diverse stakeholders and sectors.



OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Supported by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, FIRST STOP is a strategic plan to reduce youth violence and victimization within Greater East St. Louis. FIRST STOP is nested within the existing framework of the East Side Aligned (ESA) movement and is an addendum to the ESA Roadmap, our community's comprehensive strategy to ensure all children and youth are healthy, safe and secure; ready to learn and work; and empowered to create change.

Development of ESA Roadmap

The ESA Roadmap was developed through an intensive 18-month planning and stakeholder engagement process (July 2014-December 2015), co-led by youth. It is comprised of 4 big goals, 14 sub-goals and over 180 interconnected strategies to improve the readiness and well-being of young people by the year 2025. The process brought together individuals from all walks of life—representing every constituency and sector—many of which never were in the same room with one another or together often enough.

The process yielded a widely-supported, shared agenda for change: ESA Roadmap. Moreover, it cultivated trust, built new and repaired existing relationships and partnerships, generated energy and investment, instilled hope and set a course for a new way of doing business on behalf of young people. Perhaps most importantly, it established platforms for youth to exercise their voice, leadership and power—a guiding principle we remain unflinching toward living out today.

Once the ESA Roadmap was completed, the next step was to prioritize the sub-goals and strategies to focus on over an initial three year period. The prioritization process included a stakeholder survey, listening sessions with youth at multiple program sites and discussions with several issue-specific coalitions. Each stakeholder group unanimously identified Sub-Goal #3—*“All children and youth feel and are safe”*—as the number one priority of the ESA movement.

The ESA Roadmap reflects what the community is currently working toward as well as lays out a set of bold recommendations for change throughout our civic infrastructure and across the cradle-to-career continuum. It does not, however, lay out detailed action plans with specific deliverables, timelines, budgets and accountable bodies. As such, the number one lead strategy under Sub-Goal #3 was *“to develop and implement a localized, comprehensive plan to reduce crime and violence.”*

The OJJDP Safe and Thriving Communities Grant provided us with the investment and, moreover, strategic guidance needed to develop this detailed plan. The process used to develop FIRST STOP pulled from practices used to develop the ESA Roadmap as well as followed the four step process championed by the National Forum for Youth Violence Prevention:

1. Build Partnerships and Raise Awareness
2. Gather and Use Data to Inform Strategies
3. Write the Plan
4. Implement the Plan

Step 1: Build Partnerships and Raise Awareness

Initiate call to action | Agree on a common vision of success | Organize a structure for plan development

The development of the ESA Roadmap yielded a bold call to action and vision for improving the safety and well-being of our children and youth. The process also built the foundation of an operating structure to lead the development of FIRST STOP (*See Step 4 on page 35*).

After reviewing the components of the Safe and Thriving Communities Grant, the National Forum for Youth Violence Prevention's (Forum) strategic planning toolkit and plans from other communities, ESA's leadership—considering our community's context—called on specific individuals and entities to play a leadership role in advancing the development of our plan.

The Forum recommends that *"there must be demonstrated and visible commitment, support and leadership from the Mayor, Chief of Police and School Superintendent."* The ESA footprint is defined by the boundaries of East St. Louis School District 189 and spans four municipalities of varying size with the City of East St. Louis being the largest and most populated (68%). Unfortunately, all four municipalities have capacity limitations, have been plagued with incidents of corruption and experience continuous turnover in leadership, particularly among police chiefs.

Public Officials

Given the multijurisdictional scope of the ESA footprint and capacity limitations of municipalities, ESA's leadership—with the support of the sitting Mayors—requested the St. Clair County Chairman's Office to serve as lead applicant and body accountable for the planning process. St. Clair County Chairman Mark Kern accepted the invitation and designated St. Clair County Director of Administration, Debra Moore, as oversight lead. In addition, Chairman Kern has provided public advocacy and pledged to pursue opportunities to generate new and align existing resources within St. Clair County government to advance the plan.

At the time onset of the planning process, each of the sitting municipal mayors pledged similar support. During the planning process, two municipalities elected new mayors and relationships are currently being cultivated. City of East St. Louis Mayor, Emeka Jackson-Hicks, has been most significantly engaged and supportive, as FIRST STOP aligns with her *Restoration of Hope* agenda. *Go to page 66 to learn more about Restoration of Hope.*

School District

The Superintendent of East St. Louis School District 189, Arthur Culver, helped birth the East Side Aligned movement and has served as Chair of the Alignment Council for the past three years. He is a steadfast advocate for the vision and goals of FIRST STOP and has designated key personnel—including the Director of Parent and Student Support Services—throughout the district to engage and lead in the planning and implementation processes.

Law Enforcement

Municipal, county, state and federal law enforcement leaders are actively engaged in the ESA movement, have contributed significantly to the planning process and will continue to play critical roles in implementing the strategies outlined in FIRST STOP.

The most notable law enforcement champion for reducing youth violence within our footprint is the St. Clair County State's Attorney's Office (SAO), led by State's Attorney Brendan Kelly. The SAO vigorously works to strengthen law enforcement effectiveness and accountability, reduce recidivism, expand various prevention programs and foster collaboration among law enforcement and social services.

Illinois State Police's Metro East Police Assistant Team (MEPAT), a unit established to specifically eradicate gang violence and activities within our footprint, is engaged and will provide critical expertise and leadership in this area.

The Metro East Police District Commission (MEPDC) was established through Illinois Senate Bill 549 in August of 2012 to serve as a multi-disciplinary group designed to address public safety challenges in the Metro East area of Illinois. MEPDC holds authority to create ordinances that regulate and strengthen departmental standards. MEPDC spans the jurisdictions of our footprint's local police departments and its members include St. Clair County State's Attorney, St. Clair County Sheriff, municipal police chiefs, civic leaders and representatives from the Fraternal Order of Police and Illinois State Police. MEPDC members, particularly the police chiefs, are actively engaged and will continue to serve as body providing strategic counsel and public accountability.

The Office of the U.S. Attorney of Southern Illinois has also lending time and expertise to the planning process. The U.S. Attorney's Office convenes a Violent Crimes Task Force, which will be strategically connected to our work.

East St. Louis Housing Authority provides security for its residents and the Director of Public Safety has also been actively engaged.

RESIDENTS

"No decision about us without us." This phrase is core to authenticity and effectiveness of the East Side Aligned movement. Our stakeholders firmly believe that no collective impact effort can be sustained without significant investment in the human capital of residents. Resident engagement is not so much a strategy as it is our way of doing business.

Over 400 residents and stakeholders were engaged in developing the ESA Roadmap. Over 50% of those participants were young people and their voices have been uplifted and integrated into the FIRST STOP planning process. We also recruited and trained a cohort of young adults to serve as Community Change Fellows to assist ESA stakeholders in developing our plan.

The Community Change Fellows were charged with researching strategies from other communities, providing input on proposed strategies from our application, seeking input from other area youth, supporting the facilitation of planning meetings and informing the design of the plan. The Fellows also had were trained in the basics of community organizing as well as participated in an advocacy day in Springfield, Illinois where they spoke with legislators about the impact of violence in their community.

While the movement has been intentional about engaging and amplifying the voices of residents, ESA's leadership believes it can and needs to do better. ESA leaders are currently working to ensure residents, particularly young people, have equal power in determining the ESA movement's agenda and resource allocation. We are committed to strengthening, building and aligning platforms and pipelines for young people to exercise their leadership and power. This entails, in part, re-examining our memberships, distribution of power and resources, agendas and current commitments to equity and justice—and making necessary changes.

We believe residents hold the keys for driving transformational impact and changing the trajectory a generation.

Public Health

Illinois is known for its fragmentation and excessive layers of government. St. Clair County has two health departments: East Side Health District (ESHD) and St. Clair County Health Department (SCCHD). ESHD serves Canteen Township, Centreville Township, East St. Louis Township and Stites Township, which covers the entirety of our footprint. ESHD Administrator, Elizabeth Patton-Whiteside, was on the core team that helped birth the East Side Aligned movement and remains very committed to this day, despite managing the aftermath of Illinois' two-year budget impasse. ESHD views violence as a public health issue and Administrator Patton-Whiteside has spearheaded data collection and sharing efforts in support of this plan.

Community- and Faith-Based Organizations

Numerous community- and faith-based organizations, particularly those focused on child well-being and youth development, are intricately involved in the ESA movement. Not only are these entities on the front lines providing critical programs and services, but they are leading the way toward living out Collective Impact principles and practices. Every community- and faith-based organization has a role to play in reducing youth violence and victimization. Many of them are already working to do so—in some form—through their own programs and/or through their involvement in local coalitions. These entities are answering the call for broader partnerships and bolder action on behalf of our young people.

Backbone Support

To best understand ESA's backbone support infrastructure, it is important to provide further context to the scope and structure of the East Side Aligned movement. ESA's central focus is ensuring children, from prenatal to young adulthood, are supported, ready and well. As such, stakeholders work to align policy, practice and investment to improve child- and youth-serving systems. At the same time, it is understood that children cannot flourish if the community in which they live is not flourishing. As such, ESA also focuses on improving public health, public safety and community development systems.

The ESA Roadmap guides the movement. A constellation of existing (and emerging) coalitions drive the Roadmap's systems change strategies. Sustaining this collective impact movement is a team of backbone support staff, housed within various organizations. There are backbone staff persons that support the overall ESA movement as well as staff persons dedicated to supporting population-, issue- and/or initiative-based coalitions.

United Way of Greater St. Louis (UWGSL) serves as the lead backbone support organization. UWGSL has extensive experience in capacity building, issue coordination and alignment, outcomes management and grant management. UWGSL was selected as ESA's lead backbone because of demonstrated success in mobilizing relevant stakeholders to address pressing and complex community issues. The backbone "vertebrae" also includes other entities that allocate a portion of a staff person's time to fulfill backbone support functions, such as Children's Home + Aid, East St. Louis School District 189. Given such a dynamic and multi-faceted structure, achievements cannot be attributed to a single entity. Achievements are the result of many living out the principles and practices that the East Side Aligned movement fosters.

Step 2: Gather and Use Data to Inform Strategies

Review current youth violence research and evidence | Collect and share local data on youth violence | Use the data to inform strategy selection | Identify resources and assets

No matter where we were or what the purpose of an interaction or meeting was, we consistently asked questions and actively listened to learn about the "when, where and who" of youth violence as well as the "how" to prevent and stop it. In other words, stakeholder engagement around this issue was and will be ongoing and data gathering is interwoven into all aspects of our work.

Consistent with ESA's core values (*see page 28*), the planning team aggressively pursued understanding of the drivers of youth violence as well as the solutions to prevent future violence. As our community analysis (*see page #*) demonstrates, we engaged and supported various entities in collecting, analyzing and sharing data to inform this plan. In addition, we:

- Conducted informational phone calls with peer cities to learn what's working;
- Held issue specific convenings with key stakeholders to take stock of assets and gaps and foster innovation and alignment;
- Continuously monitored the news to assess "real time" trends and conditions;
- Reviewed existing plans within our community and integrated what made sense;

- Completed a literature review of evidence-based and best practices; and
- Received technical assistance from the Prevention Institute

Our process has revealed that we have significant infrastructure gaps and capacity limitations with regard to data collection. Improving our data and evaluation systems is a key objective of this plan and it will be spearheaded by the Brown School Evaluation Center, housed at Washington University in St. Louis.

Step 3: Write the Plan

Develop strategies and goals | Match resources to strategies and goals | Develop measurable objectives and activities

The drafting of FIRST STOP strived to take into account all of the mobilization and assessment work completed throughout the planning process. The proposed strategies listed in our application for the Safe and Thriving Communities Grant have been significantly strengthened as a result of the planning process. It is our hope that FIRST STOP reflects the desires of our community as well as demonstrates both our commitment and ability to build and live out the three key pillars developed by the City of New Orleans to help guide our work:

1. Designating a structure for reducing youth violence and victimization to ensure activities will be inclusive of diverse partners, coordinated, and sustainable.
2. Coordinating and integrating activities towards shared priorities will help ensure resources are allocated to meet the most pressing needs of young people
3. Establishing benchmarking and fostering accountability will help track progress and the impact on the lives of young people, families and the community.

Step 4: Implement the Plan

Work the plan | Revisit and update the plan

Sustained reductions in youth violence and victimization require dedicated leadership, strong partnerships, well-coordinated efforts and significant investments in child well-being. Achieving FIRST STOP's vision will require extensive collaboration among partners and a sound infrastructure to support the work in the years ahead.

Goal #1 of FIRST STOP is: Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization. The first objective under this goal is to establish and sustain a community-led violence reduction coalition. At the onset of our planning process, we did not intend to establish a new coalition. Rather, our approach was geared toward infusing violence reduction goals, objectives and strategies within existing coalitions. However, as the planning process progressed, it became clear that a new coalition was needed, primarily due to:

- The significance of the issue requires a dedicated table that yields sufficient focus and resources.
- Most of the current tables addressing crime, violence and justice systems issues lack the presence of the most important voices—our young people. Our young people, and other residents, desire a table in which they are actively engaged in and leading.

The coalition we are establishing provides a platform for young people and other residents to engage with one another as well as with law enforcement, service providers and other key stakeholders to work collaboratively toward change. It will be embedded within the East Side Aligned movement's operating structure yielding essential expertise, resources and influence. This operating structure is designed to serve existing organizations and coalitions actively working to advance ESA Roadmap strategies. Decision-making is shared and the structure and Roadmap are adaptable to community needs.

ESA's Executive Committee is committed to offering the full capacity of its stakeholders, as reflected in part by those who serve on the Alignment Council, to support the generation and responsible allocation of resources; coordination and implementation of activities; collecting, tracking and sharing of various forms of data; and perhaps most important, the continuous authentic engagement of residents as leaders and change makers in achieving FIRST STOP's vision and goals.

As the lead backbone support organization for the ESA movement, United Way of Greater St. Louis (UWGSL) will house staff dedicated to FIRST STOP implementation. Direct supervision of the dedicated staff will be provided by UWGSL's Director of East Side Aligned with regular reporting to the St. Clair County (SCC) Chairman's Office. The SCC Chairman will provide strategic guidance and leadership and various SCC offices and departments—including State's Attorney, County Auditor, Intergovernmental Grants and Economic Development—will allocate necessary time and resources to advance the plan.

Numerous support partners, representative of multiple sectors and constituencies, will be engaged in implementing the Plan. Support partners who play or will assume a lead implementation role include:

CORE AREA	LEAD(S)*
Set the Foundation	Brown School Evaluation Center
Address Trauma	Alive and Well Communities East St. Louis School District 189 Wyman Center
Invest in Kids	East St. Louis School District 189 Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership Greater East St. Louis Youth Coordinating Council Children's Home + Aid St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council Workforce Investment Board
Cultivate Resident Power	Community Organizing and Family Issues
Interrupt and Deter Violence	St. Clair County State's Attorney Office Children's Home + Aid Community Lifeline Metro East Police District Commission Municipal , County and State Police Departments
Improve Built Environment	Greater East St. Louis Business Development Association City of East St. Louis Mayor's Office

**St. Clair County, United Way of Greater St. Louis and the East Side Aligned Alignment Council share ultimate accountability for each core area and will be involved in strategy implementation.*

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

These areas are designated primarily as a way to organize FIRST STOP. In practice, they frequently overlap and boundaries between them are artificial. Given the complex nature of the issue, it is important that approaches to address youth violence are balanced and coordinated across areas.

There are several themes among the goals, objectives and strategies outlined in FIRST STOP. These themes are consistent with a collective impact approach to systems change: capacity-building, integration or scaling of evidence-based practices, data sharing, policy change, public will-building and amplification of youth voice. Cross-cutting all of the strategies is the need to consider and address historical trauma, built environment⁵¹ and the system traps and personal gaps⁵² that prevent youth readiness and perpetuate inequities.

Strategy Template

Goal:	
Objective	
Strategies	Output Indicators:
	Outcome Indicators:
	Impact Indicators:
Needs/Protective Factors Addressed:	PIER Tactic:
Lead	Partner

Goal – The strategic goal of the strategy.

Objective – The concrete, measurable objective of the strategy.

Output Indicators – Data to be collected to measure strategy activities.

Outcome Indicator – Data to be collected to measure the effects of strategy activities.

Impact Indicators – The long-term outcomes the strategy desires to produce.

Needs/Protective Factors Addressed - Lists the needs addressed and priority risk and protective factors of this strategy.

PIER Tactic – Classifies the strategy as Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement and/or Re-entry.

Lead(s) – The entities expected to lead implementation of the strategy.

Partner(s) – The entities expected to play a key support role in implementing the strategy.

⁵¹ In public health, built environment refers to physical environments that are designed with health and wellness as integral parts of the communities. It includes healthy food access, community gardens, "walkability" and "bikability."

⁵²For more on readiness traps and gaps: <http://sparkaction.org/readiness/key-ideas>

SET THE FOUNDATION – Strategies to sustain a widely-supported movement to improve the safety and well-being of young people over the long-term.

GOAL 1:

OUR COMMUNITY HAS THE COMMITMENT, CAPACITY AND CONNECTEDNESS TO ADDRESS YOUTH VIOLENCE AND VICTIMIZATION

OBJECTIVE 1.1:

ESTABLISH AND SUSTAIN A COMMUNITY-LED VIOLENCE REDUCTION COALITION

Goal 1: Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization	
Objective 1.1: Establish and sustain a community-led violence reduction coalition	
Strategies: #1 Increase resident ownership the lead the coalition and improve coordination of resources and activities #2 Create strong communication linkages between and among residents, organizations, and other coalitions #3 Generate investment for backbone infrastructure supports and strategy implementation Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community support/connectedness • Coordination of resources among agencies • Community investment 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # actively involved in coordinated activities • # of relationships built • # and type of activities • # and type of communications • # of proposals submitted • # of MOUs developed
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of engagement of coalition members • Increased perception of ownership in coalition • Improved coordination of resources • Improved and expanded communication linkages • # of new and leveraged resources obtained
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained community-led coalition • Decrease in violent incidents
	PIER Tactic: All
Lead(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESA Executive Committee • United Way of Greater St. Louis 	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Clair County Chairman’s Office • Public Housing Authorities

Strategy #1: Increase resident and stakeholder ownership and improve coordination of resources and activities

Bringing people together is critical needed. Our planning process revealed a significant lack of awareness and gaps in connectivity among residents and stakeholders regarding current resources and efforts to reduce violence.

At the onset of our planning process, we did not intend to establish a new coalition. Rather, our approach was geared toward infusing violence reduction goals, objectives and strategies within

existing coalitions. However, as the planning process progressed, it became clear that a new coalition was needed, primarily due to:

- The significance of the issue: there needs to be a table that yields adequate time, attention and resources to driving the implementation of FIRST STOP
- Most of the current tables addressing crime, violence and justice systems issues lack the presence of the most important voices—our young people. Our young people, and other residents, desire a table in which they are actively engaged in and leading.

A new coalition provides a platform for young people and other residents to engage with one another as well as with law enforcement, service providers and other stakeholders to work collaboratively toward change.

FIRST STOP calls for the creation of the **Roundtable for Community Justice and Healing**. The name is important and amplifies the following:

- A roundtable is a meeting in which each participant has equal status.
- Community Justice broadly refers to all variants of crime prevention and justice activities that explicitly include the community in their processes and set the enhancement of community quality of life as a goal. Community Justice follows a set of guiding principles:
 - The community, including individual victims and offenders, is the ultimate customer, as well as partner of the justice system.
 - Partnerships for action, among justice components and citizens, strive for community safety and well-being.
 - The community is the preferred source of problem solving and citizens work to prevent victimization, provide conflict resolution and maintain peace.
 - Crime is confronted by addressing social disorder, criminal activities and behavior, and by holding offenders accountable for the harm they cause to victims and the community.
- Fostering community healing to central to our work. The Roundtable will create space to integrate and process the trauma, acknowledge and validate the hurt and connect victims to a positive and supportive network. It will also create space to examine the issues, policies and practices inherent to race, racialization and structural racism that perpetuate racial inequity.

The Roundtable will be co-led by residents and institutional leaders and receive staff support from United Way of Greater St. Louis. It will be embedded within the ESA movement's operating structure yielding essential expertise, resources and influence.

Strategy #2: Create strong communication linkages between and among residents, organizations and other coalitions

The Roundtable for Community Justice and Healing will greatly assist in improving communication and connectivity. However, no one table will be able to reach everyone. Moreover, the East Side Aligned movement has strived to live out a “meet people where they are” approach. While we’ve met people where they are—public housing councils, churches, afterschool sites, barber shops and salons, etc.—it’s time to establish greater accountability to developing, strengthen and maintaining communication linkages between and among residents, organizations and other coalitions.

Systematizing our communication—meaning ensuring all tables and settings receive the same information around the same time and in relevant ways—will not only increase awareness. It will generate hope, confidence and commitment to our efforts to reduce youth violence and victimization. It could also help spur others into action.

ESA stakeholders will be trained in the ABL Change Framework for Systems Change. This framework provides specific tools to facilitate communication and build a community engagement infrastructure that supports real-time learning and action across diverse stakeholders and sectors.

Strategy #3: Generate investment for backbone infrastructure supports and strategy implementation

The Collective Impact framework highlights the importance of having a well-resourced and high quality backbone support infrastructure to guide build public will, facilitate the coordination of activities, mobilize resources and sustain bold action. It is a core element of ensuring the viability and sustainability of our efforts to reduce youth violence and victimization.

Ensuring adequate backbone capacity is only one part of the equation. Funding is needed to support the development, implementation and sustainability of effective programs and strategies led by an array community partners.

In particular, FIRST STOP calls for significant investment and capacity building support for grassroots community- and faith-based organizations, as these entities “have firsthand knowledge of the streets and of the individual, family and community pain and disruption caused by violence. They bring passion, presence and persistence and play significant roles in violence amelioration and prevention.”⁵³

⁵³ [*New Initiative Supports Faith- and Community-Based Youth Violence Prevention Effort*](#)

**OBJECTIVE 1.2:
IMPROVE THE CAPACITY OF DATA AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS**

Goal 1: Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization	
Objective 1.2: Improve the capacity of data and evaluation systems	
Strategies: #4 Coordinate shared data measurements among partners #5 Provide data collection, management, and analysis training Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to data and data infrastructure • Coordination of resources among agencies 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory of existing data sources and systems • Data systems developed/improved • Evaluation plan(s) • Data collection and management protocols • Data sets • Data sharing agreements Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collected are relevant and useful • Greater access to and utilization of data • Improved data quality Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased communication of the performance and impact of initiative PIER Tactic: All
Lead: Brown School Evaluation Center	Partners: <i>All entities will engage in this work</i>

Strategy #4: Coordinate shared data measurements among partners
Strategy #5: Provide data collection, management, and analysis training

These strategies will leverage local evaluation expertise to build systems- and program-level data and evaluation capacity. The Brown School Evaluation Center (Evaluation Center) will work with grant leads, partners and other stakeholders to identify appropriate performance indicators, including those identified by OJJDP, and develop tools and processes for collecting data. The evaluation team will assist with development of any new qualitative and quantitative data collection tools for grant partners to use for data collection. The Evaluation Center will develop a standardized data collection protocol for each data source and train grant partners on procedures to ensure data quality.

The Evaluation Center takes a comprehensive, iterative approach to providing individualized technical assistance and consultation using the Assess-Learn-Apply framework.

- **Assess:** Our priority is to meet our partners where they are and provide realistic and feasible recommendations for their evaluation and performance measurement efforts.
- **Learn:** We will infuse an evaluation perspective into the implementation process, and build familiarity with evaluation team members.
- **Apply:** We will provide on-going tailored assistance to partners throughout the implementation of their evaluation activities to ensure they are successful.

Continuous feedback occurs throughout the process and is critical to ensuring the grant partners are able to achieve their objectives and communicate their progress.

Evaluation Capacity Building Approach



**OBJECTIVE 1.3:
IMPLEMENT A PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN TO ELEVATE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VIOLENCE
AND BUILD PUBLIC WILL TO ACT**

Goal 1: Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization	
Objective 1.3: Implement a public awareness campaign to elevate the significance of the issue and build public will to act	
Strategies: #6 Implement a FIRST STOP marketing and communications campaign #7 Intentionally educate and engage key stakeholder groups Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural norms that support violence • Exposure to violence • Community support/connectedness 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign plan • # and location of individuals • # of marketing/communications products • # media coverage episodes related to violence prevention activities
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of FIRST STOP campaign • Increased public understanding and knowledge about the issue • Increased knowledge of solutions to address
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased support for addressing the issue
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Lead: To be identified	Partners: Numerous

“It won’t happen overnight, but it could make you feel like change is coming.” – Youth Leader

The impact of violence is wide, deep and does not just affect victims and perpetrators. Everyone in the community (and region) suffers because of violence. Our nation is losing an entire generation of youth, particularly young black men, to senseless violence. A public awareness campaign is meant to be part of a larger coordinated effort to start a broad conversation within the community about ways to stop the shooting and change mindsets and behavioral norms about violence.

This objective aims to increase awareness of the impact of youth violence and change mindsets and cultural norms that support violence. The public awareness campaign is designed to raise awareness of the issue of violence throughout the ESA footprint and broader St. Louis region, mirroring the role of the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention in stimulating a national conversation around the issue.

Strategy #6: Implement a FIRST STOP marketing and communications campaign

The FIRST STOP marketing and communications campaign will include outdoor, print, radio and video messages. The core idea is that frequent reports that mark each death do little more than distract from a critical truth—that there is so much more to the story. The aim is to inspire youth to change their thinking and to galvanize the community to work alongside them to reduce youth violence and victimization.

The campaign will leverage and integrate components of existing local, statewide and national campaigns:

- **Alive and Well STL:** Just across the river from East St. Louis, Alive and Well STL is a community-wide effort focused on reducing the impact of stress and trauma on our health and well-being. It elevates trauma and toxic stress as a regional health priority in order to improve health, educational and economic outcomes.
- **Look Through Their Eyes:** A statewide campaign, led by the Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition (ICTC), to raise awareness about childhood trauma throughout Illinois. ICTC has developed tools to help parents, caregivers, children and those working with children recognize and deal with trauma when it occurs.
- **Changing Minds:** The U.S. Department of Justice, Futures Without Violence and the Ad Council developed Changing Minds to raise awareness about the prevalence and impact of children's exposure to violence and the trauma that may result; motivate adults to be more caring, concerned, and supportive figures to the children around them; and support programs and practices that help to make homes, schools, and communities safer for children and youth.

Strategy #7: Intentionally educate and engage key stakeholder groups

The marketing campaign referenced in Strategy #6 will only go so far if we are not intentionally educating and engaging people directly. We need to develop and provide a diverse array of presentations, convenings and tools—tailored to meet the unique needs and interests of multiple audiences—to generating greater awareness, engagement and investment. Such convenings provide an opportunity for healing and solutions-focused dialogue.

OBJECTIVE 1.4: INFLUENCE POLICY DEVELOPMENT, ADVOCACY, AND AGENDA-SETTING

Since its inception, the ESA movement has worked to link, leverage and align knowledge, talent and resources to tackle complex issues and advance equity for kids. Guided by a systems thinking approach, ESA stakeholders have intentionally established strong relationships with numerous statewide organizations that are experienced in policy and advocacy, including:

- Advance Illinois
- Children's Home + Aid | Ahlquist Center for Policy, Practice & Innovation
- Illinois Action for Children
- Illinois Collaboration on Youth
- Voices for Illinois Children

ESA stakeholders cultivated these relationships to 1) learn the dynamics of Illinois policymaking and strengthen local capacity to engage in policy and advocacy, 2) maintain a pulse on legislative happenings through direct, continuous communication with those working in Springfield and Chicago and 3) ensure East St. Louis area residents and stakeholders had avenues to inform and drive policy development and reform.

Goal 1: Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization	
Objective 1.4: Influence policy development, advocacy, and agenda-setting	
Strategies: #8 Review current policies and develop recommendations to enhance child well-being #9 Provide advocacy trainings to stakeholders Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement capacity • Punitive practices • Access to programs and services 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy agenda • # advocacy trainings held • # and diversity of advocates, champions • # and type of activities conducted
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # created, amended, or rescinded policies • Improved advocacy network
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage youth/families effected by policy change
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESA Policy and Advocacy Committee • United Way of Greater St. Louis 	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Councils; County Board; State Legislature • East St. Louis School District 189 • Illinois Collaboration on Youth

Strategy #8: Review current policies, develop recommendations and advance policies to enhance child well-being

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines policy as “a law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive or voluntary practice of governments and other institutions. Policy decisions are frequently reflected in resource allocations. Child well-being and health can be influenced by policies in many different sectors.”

While our society touts the importance of child well-being in our rhetoric, we have often failed to prioritize it in our laws. The Roundtable for Community Justice and Healing will have a Policy Work Group responsible for reviewing current policies on a local, state and federal level and drafting policy reform recommendations that will advance the goals, objectives and strategies outlined in FIRST STOP.

The Policy Work Group will build off of existing momentum occurring with Illinois to advance a child well-being agenda. During this past legislative session, Illinois’ General Assembly passed:

- HB2663: Requires early childhood programs receiving State Board of Education grants for preschool educational programs to prohibit the expulsion of children. When persistent and serious challenging behaviors emerge, the early childhood programs shall document steps taken to ensure that the child can participate safely in the program and utilize a range of community resources.

- HB3165: Requires Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice staff to receive training in restorative justice practices, defined as programs and activities based on a philosophical framework that emphasizes the need to repair harm through a process of mediation and peace circles in order to promote empowerment and reparation.

Strategy #9: Provide advocacy training to stakeholders

PolicyLink defines advocacy as “the art of influence and persuasion that is essential for fostering the creation, adoption, and implementation of promising policy solutions that catalyze social change.” Currently, the voices and expertise of those working within local communities is scarce in and around Illinois’ State Capitol. There is a tremendous need to create platforms for local efforts to more directly inform statewide advocacy and facilitate policy innovations. Such platforms are needed to be strengthened at the local and federal level as well, particularly in light of the cuts being proposed to core programs, such as 21st Century Learning Centers, which provide academic enrichment opportunities during non-school hours for kids that attend high-poverty and low-performing schools.

Leveraging a curriculum developed by Nonprofit Missouri, we will offer workshops with five major themes:

- Understanding the difference between advocacy and lobbying;
- Understanding state and local legislative processes;
- Identifying strategic opportunities for state-level legislative advocacy;
- Identifying strategic opportunities for local advocacy;
- Building an advocacy action plan.

OBJECTIVE 1.5:

FOSTER HEALING AND RECONCILIATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES

Goal 1: Our community has the commitment, capacity and connectedness to address youth violence and victimization	
Objective 1.5: Foster healing and reconciliation between individuals, organizations, and communities	
Strategies: #10 Integrate community building, healing and reconciliation practices into all aspects of implementation #11 Intentionally apply a racial equity framework Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community support/connectedness • Racial inequity • Trauma 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of practices implemented • Ways in which racial equity framework were implemented
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater sense of community among engaged citizens, organizations • # of new relationships sustained between organizations
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased feelings of trust and community cohesion
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Lead: United Way of Greater St. Louis	Partners: Forward Through Ferguson

Strategy #10: Integrate community building, healing and reconciliation practices into all aspects of implementation

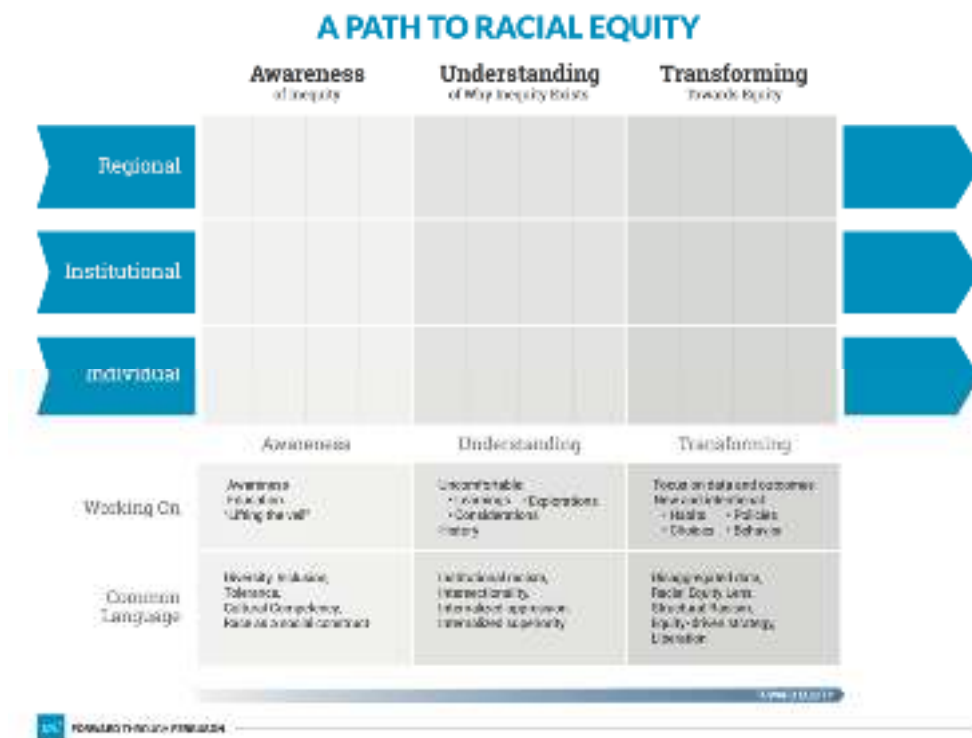
“Hurt people hurt people.” – Area Resident

Our community is crippled by distrust and broken relationships on an individual, organizational and institutional level. This hinders our ability to work together and make progress. Moreover, it further yields hurt, trauma, fragmentation and conflict. We need to call attention to this and take courageous actions to foster healing and reconciliation.

Collective efficacy is defined by attachment and mutual trust among neighborhood residents and their willingness to intervene on behalf of others’ well-being. Neighborhoods with high levels of collective efficacy are able to work together to reduce violence.

Strategy 11: Intentionally apply a racial equity framework

Racial disparities extend to employment, education, housing, transportation and the application of justice. Racial equity refers to the capacity of our region to create, manage and distribute resources in a way that gives people from all racial backgrounds the opportunity to thrive. Throughout the planning process, we have strived to apply a racial equity lens and this is a practice that needs to continue through implementation. A racial equity framework is applied to existing and new regional policies, initiatives, programs and projects in order to address and eliminate existing disparities for racial and ethnic populations. [Forward Through Ferguson](#) developed a tool to help people and organizations see the full path toward Racial Equity, distinguish between the different stages and locate themselves and their projects along it:



ADDRESS TRAUMA – Strategies to create trauma-informed, -sensitive and – responsive environments

GOAL 2:

EVERY SETTING IN WHICH KIDS LEARN AND PLAY HAS WELL-TRAINED ADULTS APPLYING PRACTICES THAT FOSTER SAFETY, HEALING AND WELL-BEING

OBJECTIVE 2.1:

INCREASE COMMUNITY’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPACT OF STRESS AND TRAUMA

Goal 2: Every setting in which kids learn and play has well-trained adults applying practices that foster safety, healing and well-being	
Objective 2.1: Increase community’s understanding of and capacity to respond to stress and trauma	
Strategies: #12 Conduct stress and trauma awareness workshops throughout the footprint #13 Provide training on integrating trauma-informed practices #14 Establish trauma-informed learning collaboratives Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to violence • Experience living in poverty • Cultural norms that support violence • Access to programs and services • Community support/connectedness 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of trainings held • # of participants • # of collaboratives and participation • # and type of events held
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge about impact of trauma and toxic stress • Increased confidence to identify and respond to stress and trauma • Shared common language regarding trauma
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence is de-normalized • Increased utilization of trauma-informed practices
	PIER Tactic: Prevention, Intervention
Lead: Alive and Well Communities	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East St. Louis School District 189 • Illinois Federation of Teachers • St. Clair County Mental Health Board • Wyman Center

Strategy #12: Conduct stress and trauma awareness workshops throughout the footprint

Strategy #13: Provide training on integrating trauma-informed practices

“[Trauma Awareness] Training is definitely needed for teachers and parents.” – Youth Leader

Childhood exposure to trauma adversely affects physical health outcomes, mental health outcomes, and educational performance. It also increases the likelihood for involvement in violence later in life. To effectively address youth violence by breaking cycles of violence and mitigate the risk factors that result from traumatic exposure to violence, our community needs

to be trauma aware and build trauma informed approaches within all of our settings and institutions, particularly those that serve children and youth.

By addressing trauma—especially trauma as the result of exposure to violence—we can build resiliency among our young people. FIRST STOP calls for integrating trauma-informed practices where our young people live, learn, work, play and pray, while connecting them to behavioral and physical health resources.

We will offer Trauma Aware 101 workshops throughout the community to generate understanding of what trauma is and how it can impact us. We will also offer more specialized training on the symptoms and impact of traumatic experiences on children and youth, including how to address traumatic stress, factors that make young people more or less resilient, steps for providing care and secondary trauma in professionals.

The trainings—which aim to transform climates and build individual and organizational capacity to implement, sustain and improve the delivery of trauma-focused services—will be offered to:

- Schools
- Public Housing
- Out-of-School Time Providers
- Law Enforcement
- Faith Communities
- General Public

Strategy #14: Establish trauma-informed learning collaboratives

Becoming trauma-informed is a long-term commitment and culture shift. According to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, a program, organization, or system that is trauma-informed:

- Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;
- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff and others involved with the system;
- Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices;
- And seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.

Specialized Learning Collaboratives will be established to support stakeholders in a two-year journey to become trauma-informed. Using the Missouri Model, A Developmental Framework for Trauma-Informed, the Learning Collaboratives will guide participants in a change management process to help their organizations change their cultures, policies and practices.

OBJECTIVE 2.3:
IMPROVE ACCESS, COORDINATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORT SERVICES AND
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Goal 2: Every setting in which kids learn and play has well-trained adults applying practices that foster safety, healing and well-being	
Objective 2.2: Improve access, coordination and effectiveness of support services and behavioral health resources	
Strategies: #15 Align, leverage and maximize available support services and ensure quality integration within schools #16 Develop and institute an effective multi-agency intergenerational case management tracking and quality improvement system Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of resources among agencies • Access to programs and services 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of providers and services • Case management system
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased coordination among service providers and case managers
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of youth receiving services
	PIER Tactic: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East St. Louis School District 189 • United Way of Greater St. Louis 	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Home + Aid • St. Clair County Mental Health Board

Strategy #15: Align, leverage and maximize available support services and ensure quality integration within schools

Our community needs a coordinated system to effectively identify and connect high-risk individuals with needed supports and interventions to improve their well-being and reduce the likelihood of future violence. It was apparent during our planning process that children and youth are not being effectively connected support services.

An initial step has been taken to address this issue by increasing staff capacity to strategically align and coordinate available intervention resources to meet the needs of East St. Louis School District 189 students. Key task underway include:

- Facilitating a needs and resource assessments with input from teachers, school administrators, parents and students to determine ongoing needs of students and families.
- Maintaining an inventory of programs and services available for students, particularly those who are chronically absent and/or designated high-need and high-risk.
- Brokering new partnerships, including establishing service agreements, with prevention- and intervention-based agencies that are aligned with District 189’s goals and needs, establishing a continuum of services for students.
- Providing facilitative support in coordinating the work of different partners within District 189 schools, aligning the work of partners with the school staff and ensuring accountability of programs and services based on best fit, developmentally on target, and culturally appropriate and responsive to the populations served.

- Evaluating progress toward program/service goals and recommend methods to improve efficiency and effectiveness; implement those changes as necessary.

Strategy #16: Develop and institute an effective multi-agency intergenerational case management tracking and quality improvement system

FIRST STOP aspires to develop a data system that can, in real-time, provide the following information:

- What services are available (and what gaps exist)
- Who is receiving services (and to what degree)
- What impact are the services having (or not having)

Organizations providing intervention-based and case management services have expressed interest and willingness to adopt a shared client tracking system as well as establish common intake and assessment tools, shared performance measures and reporting protocols.

INVEST IN KIDS – Strategies to stop violence from happening before it ever occurs and help young people thrive

GOAL 3:

CHILDREN AND YOUTH EXHIBIT WELL-BEING AND READINESS FOR SCHOOL, WORK AND LIFE

OBJECTIVE 3.1:

INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Goal 3: Children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life	
Objective 3.1: Improve access to quality early learning programs and services	
Strategies: Advance the work of the Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership to strengthen and sustain a high-quality early childhood system	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of early childhood programs • # of children enrolled • # of children screened • # of professional development trainings
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased enrollment • Increased capacity
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase # of children ready for Kindergarten
Needs/Protective Factors Addressed:	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Lead: Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children's Home + Aid ▪ East St. Louis School District 189

Strategy #17:

Advance the work of the Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership to strengthen and sustain a high-quality early childhood system

The Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership (ELP) was formed in 2009 to offer early childhood professional development aid, develop and implement capacity building strategies that were responsive to local needs and focused on engaging the hardest-to-reach, most at-risk families in high quality early learning opportunities. From 2009 to 2012, ELP focused on creating and maintaining a network of early education providers, promoting the Illinois' Quality Rating System to encourage greater program participation and developing an advocacy strategy to communicate providers'/program needs and concerns. In 2012, Illinois received a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant and our footprint was designated as an Innovation Zone (IZ) to support Illinois' vision of: *"Every child birth to five – and especially every child with high needs – is experiencing high quality early education with strong support from family, and ready access to health care and social services."*

From 2012-2016, the ELP and IZ provided facilitative leadership and processes that included: data discovery, planning, implementation and sustainability. Two workgroups 1) Quality and 2)

Developmental Screening and Outreach were formed. The workgroups included representation from diverse cross-sector systems and guided planning and implementation of strategies. The RTT-ELC grant provided valuable resources to build infrastructure and implement capacity building activities. As RTT-ELC funding ended in 2016, it is critical to identify backbone support to sustain and scale progress.

FIRST STOP calls for stakeholders to significantly invest and engage in advance ELP's 2017 priorities revolving around access, quality and equity.

**OBJECTIVE 3.2:
INCREASE ACCESS TO QUALITY OUT-OF-SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES**

Goal 3: Children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life	
Objective 3.2: Improve access to quality out-of-school opportunities	
Strategies: Advance the work of the Greater East St. Louis Youth Coordinating Council to strengthen and sustain a high-quality out-of-school time system	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of opportunities • Attendance • # of behavioral incidents • # of professional development trainings
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased enrollment • Increased literacy • Reduced # of disciplinary incidents
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved academic performance • Increased social-emotional well-being
Needs/Protective Factors Addressed:	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Lead: Greater East St. Louis Youth Coordinating Council	Partner

**Strategy #18:
Advance the work of the Greater East St. Louis Youth Coordinating Council to strengthen and sustain a high-quality out-of-school time system**

“Our children need positive environments after school.” – Parent

This statement was expressed time and time again in meetings with parents and caregivers. They have a strong desire for their kids to have safe, supportive and productive places to go during after school hours and during the summer.

Less than 1/3 of school-aged youth living within the East St. Louis area are served by out-of-school time (OST) programs. The quality of OST programs vary. Research shows that kids benefit academically, socially and emotionally from high quality OST programs. In addition to kids, OST programs provide employment for adult residents yet most OST agencies do not prioritize or have the capacity to provide adequate staff development.

The Greater East St. Louis Youth Coordinating Council (YCC) is currently working to develop an integrated OST system that builds the capacity of agencies to provide high quality OST programs, increase the number of kids served and create intentional professional growth opportunities for staff.

A strong OST system will help ensure kids are supported and ready for school, work and life as well as be a vehicle for self-sufficiency for adults. More specifically, YCC working to:

1. Create a shared **VISION** to increase OST services and ensure high quality programs across the system that will be further developed during a planning retreat of coalition leaders
2. Increase **ACCESS** to programming through joint investment for additional staff and program sites
3. Establish cross-organization quality standards, professional development and shared curriculum resources to ensure high **QUALITY** program delivery
4. Promote **YOUTH VOICE** and leadership through a cross-organization youth council and implementing youth voice opportunities on an organizational level
5. Share school district and program **DATA** across organizations to ensure continuous feedback, learning, and progress towards improved outcomes for children and youth

FIRST STOP calls for stakeholders to significantly invest and engage in high-quality OST systems.

OBJECTIVE 3.3: INCREASE PROTECTIVE AND PROMOTIVE FACTORS IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Goal 3: Children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life	
Objective 3.3: Increase protective and promotive factors in youth development	
Strategies #19 Increase the use of social and emotional learning practices #20 Increase the use of restorative practices Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem-solving skills • Commitment to school • Academic achievement 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # teachers trained in RP and SEL • # disciplinary referrals • Academic performance
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased used of RP and SEL practices in classrooms • Decreased disciplinary referrals • Improved academic performance
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased emotional awareness and well-being
	PIER Tactic: Prevention, Intervention, Re-Entry
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Home + Aid • East St. Louis School District 189 	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out-of-School Time Providers • St. Clair County Juvenile Justice Council

Strategy #19: Increase the use of social and emotional learning practices

According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for other, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decision.

Within CASEL's framework:

- In districts, school leaders are establish a welcoming climate of teamwork and collaboration and integrate SEL into all aspects of the school day
- In classrooms, teachers model respect and empower students in every interaction and teaching SEL directly as part of reading, math and other subjects.
- In homes, family members model and support the kinds of positive behaviors that help children develop into competent and caring adults.

FIRST STOP calls for imbedding SEL Specialists within East St. Louis School District 189. SEL Specialists will provide ongoing coaching to administrators, teacher and other school personnel to support District 189's integration SEL practices. SEL Specialists will also help ensure the thoughtful, full implementation of Illinois' SEL state standards as well as facilitate activities to strengthen school culture and climate, improve student and staff well-being and, ultimately, reduce youth violence.

Strategy #20: Increase the use of restorative practices

"Kicking kids out doesn't work. More bad than good is created." – Youth Leader

Restorative practices builds healthy communities, increases social capital, reduces the impact of crime, decreases antisocial behavior, repairs harm and restores relationships.

Within schools, restorative practices offer an alternate discipline strategy that emphasizes the reparation of harm and relationship-building over punitive discipline. There is evidence to suggest that restorative approaches can reduce suspension rates and improve school climate. East St. Louis School District 189 has been working diligently to integrate restorative practices and its showing results. From the 2014-15 school year to the 2015-16 school year, the district experienced a 12 percent decline in the overall suspension rate for the district. And our secondary schools experienced a 43 percent decrease.

Restorative practices have also been increasingly being integrated within St. Clair County's juvenile justice system. For the past few years, St. Clair County's Juvenile Justice Council has promoted and facilitated the use of Teen Court.

FIRST STOP calls for stakeholders to sustain and grow their commitment to embracing and using restorative practices.

**OBJECTIVE 3.4:
EXPAND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Goal 3: Children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life	
Objective 3.4: Expand youth employment opportunities	
Strategies: #21 Increase investment for youth jobs #22 Strengthen and scale evidence-informed youth employment programs Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of resources among agencies • Youth unemployment 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # employed youth aged 16-24 • # and types of employers of youth aged 16-24
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of youth who are employed • Increased number and diversity of employers of youth aged 16-24 • Improved work readiness skills
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased number of youth who had an arrest or delinquent offense • Increase number of youth sustaining employment
	PIER Tactic: Prevention, Re-entry
Lead: To be identified	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Workforce Investment Board • Job Training Providers • Community- and Faith-based Organizations

Strategy #21: Increase investment for youth jobs

Strategy #22: Strengthen and scale evidence-informed youth employment programs

Youth unemployment is a growing problem and it threatens the future of our workforce, which threatens the success of our region. The youth in our footprint have a higher unemployment rate than any other working group. Research shows that unemployed and “unengaged” youth create a huge tax on society. The average unengaged youth costs taxpayers an average of \$215,580 over the course of their lifetime.⁵⁴

We believe that our youth simply need an opportunity to create a better life. For many of them, that opportunity begins with employment. Research shows that employment has a transformative effect on many important indicators. We believe that our future workforce is ready and waiting to work, and that given the opportunity many of these unengaged youth will rise to their full potential and transform the future of our workforce.

FIRST STOP calls for significant, sustaining investment in youth employment and for stakeholders to work to leverage the infrastructure built by STL Youth Jobs, which is serving youth just across the river in the City of St. Louis.

⁵⁴ Clive R. Belfield, Henry M. Levin, and Rachel Rosen, The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth (Corporation for Economic and Community Service and the White House Council for Community Solutions, 2012); available at: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED528650.pdf>

**OBJECTIVE 3.5:
ENHANCE SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES**

Goal 3: Children and youth exhibit well-being and readiness for school, work and life	
Objective: 3.5: Enhance support services for parents and families	
Strategies: #23 Prevent family violence through positive parenting programs Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor support for parents 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participants who participate in evidence-based positive parenting programs
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of participants who report using positive parenting techniques
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of individuals reporting adverse childhood experiences
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Lead: East Side Health District	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern Illinois Healthy Start Consortium Greater East St. Louis Early Learning Partnership

Strategy #23: Prevent family violence through positive parenting programs

East Side Health District and other key stakeholders will collaboratively assess current programs and explore integration of evidence-based positive parenting program to promote the primary prevention of child maltreatment. Early interventions are essential to preventing youth violence and victimization. Early childhood exposure to adversities increases the risk of lifetime physical and mental health consequences, in addition to violence. By investing in programs that support raising infants and young children in healthy, safe, stable and nurturing surroundings, we can prevent youth violence and promote a lifetime of positive outcomes for our children.

CULTIVATE RESIDENT POWER – Strategies to create pipelines and platforms for residents, particularly to young people, to engender self-determination and exercise their leadership and power in addressing structural and systemic issues that breeds violence

Youth Quotes about youth organizing:

- “It’s about time.”
- “It’s a more productive use of time. Need more of it.”

Given that young people are at the center of our movement, ESA stakeholders specifically share the aim of the Funders’ Collaborative on Youth Organizing: **To bring about a society in which young people are integral leaders and decision-makers in their own lives and communities, and in which the systems and institutions that serve them and their families are held accountable.**

When young people tackle a specific issue or social problem, their ideas and energy can contribute to improved outcomes related to that issue or problem. It is important for young people to have an influential role in shaping the policies and programs that impact them.

**GOAL 4:
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS ARE LEADING POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY**

**OBJECTIVE 4.1:
DEVELOP PLATFORMS AND PIPELINES FOR YOUTH TO CULTIVATE AND EXERCISE THEIR LEADERSHIP**

Goal 4: Youth and young adults are leading positive change in the community	
Objective 4.1: Develop platforms and pipelines for youth to cultivate and exercise their leadership	
Strategies: #24 Provide community organizing training to youth and young adults #25 Provide opportunities for and responsiveness to youth leadership in decision-making and facilitating change Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community support/connectedness 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # and type of trainings held # of participants
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities for youth leadership Improved youth decision-making and analysis skills Greater number of youth participating in leadership roles
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of policy and practice changes informed by youth
	PIER Tactic: Prevention, Re-entry
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI) ESA Executive Committee 	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> United Way of Greater St. Louis City of East St. Louis Mayor’s Office

Strategy #24: Provide community organizing training to youth and young adults

Youth organizing has transformative power on young people—from increasing their sense of self-efficacy and strengthening their leadership capacity to increasing their collective power, academic motivation and future commitment to civic engagement.

Involvement in organizing helps young people develop deep connections to their community. It inspires them to take an active role in solving social problems and builds their capacity and skills to lead movements for change now and in the future

For years, youth organizing groups have attested to the power of youth organizing in influencing policy, improving institutions and changing the systems that low-income youth of color need to navigate. Just as important, youth organizers have attested to the impact that youth organizing has had on them, as individuals. Many activists, organizers and advocates can remember their first direct action, the first campaign they worked on and the lifelong friends they made, with whom they connected deeply through a shared set of values and commitment to social justice. Organizers often can pinpoint the critical moment when they were sparked and saw themselves as **capable leaders** who were part of something bigger than them, bigger than the organization they represented and bigger than the campaign issue they were working on. They were able to identify as being part of a broader social justice movement, which in itself is a transformative experience.⁵⁵

FIRST STOP calls for intentional training of youth and young adults in community organizing principles and practices. This will build on existing community organizing training offered to parents, primarily mothers, within the footprint. We will specifically facilitate:

- 2 cohorts per year of approximately 20 youth/young adults to receive intensive training
- Monthly community organizing 101 sessions which will reach a broader amount of youth/young adults and serve as a feeder for the cohorts

Strategy #25: Provide opportunities for and responsiveness to youth leadership in decision-making and facilitating change

ESA stakeholders are working to employ an approach in which residents, particularly young people, have equal power in determining the ESA movement's agenda and resource allocation. Likewise, we desire for young people to have equal power in implementing FIRST STOP.

This approach requires ESA stakeholders to:

- **Design and implement intentional strategies** to engage young people in ways that are attentive to power relations and disparities and that, ultimately, ensure they are equal partners, fully involved at every step and in making decisions about initiatives and other matters that affect their lives.

⁵⁵ Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing

- **Allocate time, resources, and expertise to prepare institutional leaders and residents to engage meaningfully with each other** with a particular focus on how adults are responsive to youth voice and activism. Such engagement can be contentious and bring to the surface conscious and unconscious racial and other biases, threaten the privilege and power of some individuals and institutions and intensify the consequences of internalized oppression and historical trauma
- **Build the basics of engagement**—transportation, child-care assistance, and translation of information, interpretation during meetings and safety of young people—**into the process.**

ESA’s leadership is committed to—and seeks guidance and support in—living out the principles and practices listed above. **We desire to strengthen, build and align platforms and pipelines for young people to exercise their leadership and power.** This entails, in part, re-examining our memberships, distribution of power and resources, agendas and current commitments to equity and justice—and making necessary changes.

**OBJECTIVE 4.2:
BUILD THE CAPACITY OF NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS TO FOSTER COHESION AND IMPROVE
SAFETY**

Goal 4: Youth and young adults are leading positive change in the community	
Objective 4.2: Build the capacity of neighborhood groups to foster cohesion and improve safety	
Strategies: #26 Train residents in community-based approaches to improve safety Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community support/connectedness 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of trainings held • # of participants
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation in neighborhood groups • Increased knowledge about impact of public safety approaches
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of active neighborhood safety groups
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Lead: To be identified	Partners: Neighborhood groups; faith communities

Strategy #26: Train residents in community-based approaches to improve safety

Individuals who choose to participate in keeping their neighborhoods safe and hold criminals accountable are a powerful force in crime prevention and reduction. When residents take ownership, they discover their collective power to prevent crime and violence from happening in their communities. Engaged, connected and equipped residents do not look to government to fix their problems. Rather, they leverage government resources as their partners in developing joint solutions.

Across the river, the City of St. Louis has experienced significant reductions in crime and violence through employing the Neighborhood Ownership Model (NOM), which was developed by residents and is customizable to meet the unique conditions of each neighborhood. Effective plans typically include a mixture of citizen, government and technology-based tactics to deter crime. Examples can include:

- Citizen-based
 - Citizen safety patrol
 - Neighborhood victim support team
 - Neighborhood court advocates
- Government-based
 - Community/Police partnerships
 - Victim support training
- Technology-based
 - Security cameras
 - Email distribution of crime alerts
 - Neighborhood website or blog

FIRST STOP calls for residents to be trained in NOM and similar practices to reduce violence.

INTERRUPT AND DETER VIOLENCE – Strategies to effectively intervene at the first sign of risk and when violence occurs

GOAL 5: OUR COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS IN VIOLENT INCIDENTS

OBJECTIVE 5.1: IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTION PRACTICES

Goal 5: Our community experiences significant reductions in violent incidents	
Objective 5.1: Implement evidence-based intervention practices	
Strategies: #27 Recruit, train and support community members to interrupt and deescalate violence #28 Reduce recidivism of gun violent offenders Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gang violence 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of violence interrupters # conflicts receiving mediation # conflicts resolved # youth receiving services
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased number of youth who had a new offense or arrest Decreased number of youth victimized or revictimized Decreased number of shootings Decreased number of shootings
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased number of murders with victims under 25 years old
	PIER Tactic: Intervention, Re-entry
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Lifeline Children’s Home + Aid 	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Hospitals Community- and Faith-based Organizations

Strategy #27: Recruit, train and support community members to interrupt and deescalate violence

Currently, there are a number of individuals—in one form or another—doing their part to interrupt and deescalate violence. Our planning process convened these individuals on multiple occasions to find out what’s working and not working as well as learn what could help improve and expand their efforts. Training, coordinating and resources rose to the top of the list. **As such, FIRST STOP intends to significantly invest in building the infrastructure to equip and sustain community members in effectively implementing proven practices to reduce violence.**

The Cure Violence is a proven practice that will guide our initial work.

Cure Violence is a public health approach to violence intervention that uses street level outreach and conflict mediation to drastically reduce incidences of homicide and gun violence in a strategically chosen target area. The approach uses:

- Credible messengers to deliver strong messages about conflict resolution, redirection and community responsibility using cognitive behavioral techniques
- Violence Interrupters and Outreach Workers with street credibility to interrupt and resolve potentially violent situations before they escalate. Cure Violence Interrupters also seek to prevent retaliatory shootings by mediating ongoing conflicts between groups.
- Community mobilization and public education strategies to engage whole communities in the effort to reduce shootings and killings

Strategy #28: Reduce recidivism of gun and violent offenders

Redeploy Illinois provides comprehensive services to youth between the ages of 13-18 who are at high risk of commitment to the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ). Redeploy Illinois links youth to a wide array of needed community services and supports, as determined through an individualized needs assessment. Services are provided in the least restrictive manner possible and can include case management, court advocacy, education assistance, counseling and crisis intervention. Redeploy Illinois has been hailed as a model for the nation in efforts to reduce inefficient and ineffective juvenile justice systems and, moreover, prevent young offenders from falling into futures dominated by criminal behavior and incarceration.

Children's Home + Aid has administered Redeploy within our footprint for several years. Over 70% of the youth served were successfully diverted from IDJJ and follow-up surveys reveal most youth identifying improved outcomes in family cohesion, academic performance and future outlook.

The Redeploy approach is effective in keeping youth from the devastation of incarceration while reducing victimization and creating safer communities. However, its current guidelines stop services at age 18. **FIRST STOP calls for our community to implement the Redeploy approach for youth and young adults between the ages of 18-24 with gun and other violent offenses.**

Providing young gun/violent offenders with intensive case management services is not sufficient by itself. We need to ensure that our case managers receive necessary training, such as trauma-informed practices, to be effective in building quality relationships with young offenders.

"It can be nerve racking when folks come check on you. The person needs to engage and show you the way. It is important for them to recognize it is uncomfortable." – Youth Leader

**OBJECTIVE 5.2:
IMPLEMENT EVIDENCE-BASED ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES**

Goal 5: Our community experiences significant reductions in violent incidents	
Objective 5.2: Implement evidence-based enforcement practices	
Strategies: #29 Expand focused deterrence efforts on the most violent individuals, groups and gangs #30 Coordinate law enforcement efforts across agencies to combat gang violence Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement capacity • Coordination of resources among agencies • Crime and violence 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotspots/gangs identified • # agencies participating in multi-agency gang unit
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of agencies participating in multi-agency gang unit • Decreased number of gang-related arrests as a result of focused deterrence • Decreased number of youth victimized or revictimized
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased number of murders with victims under 25 years old
	PIER Tactic: Enforcement, Re-entry
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Clair County State’s Attorney’s Office 	Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illinois State Police • Municipal Police Departments • St. Clair County Probation and Parole

Strategy #29: Expand focused deterrence efforts on the most violent individuals, groups and gangs

Since 2014, the St. Clair County State’s Attorney’s Office (SAO) has worked to implement the foundational elements of a focused deterrence model emphasizing firearm and violent crime “preventive” prosecutions, probation and parole call-ins, community outreach, law enforcement training and implementation of improved data monitoring systems to allow for data-driven law enforcement and prosecution. Recently the SAO has formed a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) to expand their efforts to reduce violent crime. The MDT is working to improve the quality and effectiveness of call-ins with a focus on being trauma-informed and restorative-oriented. In addition, they are administering an analysis using the SARA Model to further identify needs and opportunities as well as areas for performance improvement.

The efforts being spearheaded by the SAO are consistent with the Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) designed by criminologist David Kennedy. This approach applies concentrated enforcement within areas of high crime on the groups of individuals that commit violent acts. The strategy involves three key components:

1. A focused law enforcement effort intended to deter violent behavior and ensure consequences for those who continue to commit violence.
2. Collaborating with respected members of the affected communities to deliver a single message: The violence must stop.
3. Organizing and building the capacity of community service providers so they can provide support and services to those who no longer wish to engage in violent lifestyles.

As part of GVRs, the City holds periodic “call ins,” where group and gang members are given a coordinated message from law enforcement, providers, and community members that the violence must stop. Following call ins, support services are made available to willing participants, while law enforcement efforts are focused on the most violent groups and gangs. In other communities, the GVRs model has resulted in a 35% - 60% reduction in murders.

Strategy #30: Coordinate law enforcement efforts across agencies to combat gang violence

As indicated in the previous strategy, the Group Violence Reduction Strategy calls for concentrated enforcement within areas of high crime on the groups of individuals that commit violent acts. There are several efforts underway working to combat gang violence, including:

- US Attorney’s Violent Crimes Task Force
- Street Level Investigation Crime Enforcement (SLICE) Unit, a multi-jurisdictional unit working collaboratively to address crime in “hot spot” areas
- Illinois State Police Metro East Police Assistance Team (MEPAT): A special unit created to eradicate gang violence and activities

FIRST STOP calls for the effective coordination, leveraging and maximizing of these and other efforts to reduce youth violence and victimization.

OBJECTIVE 5.3: BUILD THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

Goal 5: Our community experiences significant reductions in violent incidents	
Objective 5.3: Build the capacity of local law enforcement	
Strategies: #31 Cultivate positive relationships and interactions between youth and law enforcement #32 Integrate the use of community-oriented policing tactics #33 Enhance knowledge and skills of police officers Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law enforcement capacity • Community support/connectedness 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # and type of trainings held • Attendance • # community events attended • Frequency of biking/walking beats
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge of community-oriented policing tactics • Increased participation in community events • Increased frequency of biking/walking beats
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of positive interactions between youth and law enforcement • Decreased youth violence and victimization
	PIER Tactic: Enforcement
Lead: Metro East Police District Commission	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Municipal Police Departments ▪ Southern Illinois Law Enforcement Commission

Strategy #31: Cultivate positive relationships and interactions between youth and law enforcement

Youth need to trust law enforcement; at the same time, many police officers yearn for positive interactions with young people. Improving the relationships between youth and police officers, particularly through a series of public dialogues, was a key strategy recommended by the ESA Community Change Fellows. This strategy is also consistent with Pillar One of the Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing: Building Trust and Legitimacy.

The report states that **“Law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian—rather than a warrior—mindset to build trust and legitimacy both within agencies and with the public.** Toward that end, law enforcement agencies should adopt procedural justice as the guiding principle for internal and external policies and practices to guide their interactions with rank and file officers and with the citizens they serve. Law enforcement agencies should also establish a culture of transparency and accountability to build public trust and legitimacy. This is critical to ensuring decision making is understood and in accord with stated policy. **Law enforcement agencies should also proactively promote public trust by initiating positive non-enforcement activities to engage communities that typically have high rates of investigative and enforcement involvement with government agencies.** Law enforcement agencies should also track and analyze the level of trust communities have in police just as they measure changes in crime. This can be accomplished through consistent annual community surveys.”

FIRST STOP calls for law enforcement to live out and implement Pillar One recommendations.

Strategy #32: Integrate the use of community-oriented policing tactics

Our planning process revealed a strong desire for local law enforcement to adopt community-oriented policing tactics. Community Policing is part of Pillar Four of the Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing: Community Policing and Crime Reduction.

The report states that **“community policing emphasizes working with neighborhood residents to coproduce public safety...law enforcement agencies should develop and adopt policies and strategies that reinforce the importance of community engagement in managing public safety.** Communities should support a culture and practice of policing that reflects the values of protection and promotion of the dignity of all— especially the most vulnerable, such as children and youth most at risk for crime or violence. Law enforcement agencies should avoid using law enforcement tactics that unnecessarily stigmatize youth and marginalize their participation in schools and communities.”

Pillar Four also calls for communities to “affirm and recognize the voices of youth in community decision making, facilitate youth participation in research and problem solving and develop and fund youth leadership training and life skills through positive youth/police collaboration and interactions.” FIRST STOP calls for local law enforcement to live out community-oriented policing tactics.

Strategy #33: Enhance knowledge and skills of police officers

As extensively documented in a report developed by the U.S. Department of Justice OJP Diagnostic Center, our local police departments suffer from resource constraints and lack the capacity to effectively meet critical public safety needs.

Enhancing the knowledge and skills of local law enforcement has been a priority of the ESA movement and leaders have generated significant investment, including \$200,000 from Dynegy, a national energy supply company with a location near the footprint. Dynegy's investment aims to help cultivate 21st century policing skills within our local police departments. Efforts are underway to provide intentional professional development opportunities and specialized technical assistance to ensure safety of officers, professional standards compliance and safer communities.

ESA stakeholders are also working to strengthen the relationship between Illinois State Police (ISP) and local police departments. Such a relationship would provide for coordinated enforcement as well as foster shared learning. ISP has the expertise to enhance police municipal policing skills in the areas of investigative techniques and gang intervention. Local police officers could enhance ISP's cultural competencies as it relates to understanding the norms, traditions and perceptions of the community. This strategy is also consistent with Pillar Five of the Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing: Training and Education.

IMPROVE BUILT ENVIRONMENT – Strategies to improve outdoor physical conditions and spur economic development

GOAL 6: NEIGHBORHOODS ARE SAFE TO WALK, PLAY AND LIVE

OBJECTIVE 6.1: INCREASE COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal 6: Neighborhoods are safe to walk, play and live	
Objective 6.1: Increase community and economic development	
Strategies: #34 Build local capacity to develop and implement a community economic development plan #35 Drive neighborhood business growth Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of economic development 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of planning meetings # of new businesses # of businesses retained
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased capacity to develop a community economic development plan Increased number of new/retained businesses
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in economic development and impact
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of East St. Louis GESTL Business Development Association St. Clair County 	Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Builders Network of Metropolitan St. Louis Financial Institutions

Strategy #34: Build local capacity to develop and implement neighborhood economic development plans

With the right tools and know-how, community intermediaries—from community-based organizations to culturally-specific organizations to business district associations—can most effectively drive neighborhood economic development efforts. The best practice approach begins with a strategic community economic development plan to help residents, businesses and community development corporations connect to and compete in the regional economy.

There are numerous community and economic developments efforts underway. While great energy and commitment exists, such efforts have been fragmented. Stakeholders need to work together to consolidate existing plans into one comprehensive plan.

In addition to consolidating and enhancing plans, stakeholders need to align and coordinate resources to support and spur neighborhood economic development. While the region has many of the tools, programs and organizations that support neighborhood economic development, our footprint lacks a coordinated, strategic approach. Reaching the goals of this strategy will involve numerous public and private entities all working in the same direction to achieve agreed-upon goals for growth.

Strategy #35: Drive neighborhood business growth

Strategic public-private initiatives and partnerships to drive neighborhood business growth can help leverage and influence larger market forces. Business development efforts should be tailored to address neighborhood-specific challenges by attracting employers, fostering retail or residential development in underserved markets or by providing opportunities for businesses facing displacement to strengthen their local or regional competitiveness.

The Greater East St. Louis Business Development Association formed to for the purpose of supporting small businesses, generating economic growth and building a thriving community. This association has the energy, commitment and potential for investment in place to advance this strategy.

OBJECTIVE 6.2: IMPROVE PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Goal 6: Neighborhoods are safe to walk, play and live	
Objective 6.2: Improve physical conditions	
Strategies: #36 Expand neighborhood beautification initiatives # 37 Repair built environment deficiencies #38 Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community support/connectedness• Community blight	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• # of streetlights repaired• # of lots cleaned• # of derelict buildings removed• # of buildings renovated• # of initiative participants
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased number of derelict buildings removed
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased resident feelings of safety at home and in the community• Increased sustainability of beautified sites
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of East St. Louis• St. Clair County	Partners:

Strategy #36: Expand neighborhood beautification initiatives

Strategy #37: Repair built environment deficiencies

Blight threatens public safety, lowers property values, holds back neighborhoods and degrades quality of life. By reducing the number of dangerous, blighted areas, neighborhoods can be revitalized and become safer places to live.

Neighborhood residents spoke at length about the importance of connections between neighbors in promoting safe and vibrant neighborhoods. Many times, these connections are disrupted by conditions in the built environment that invoke and compound the trauma of high rates of community violence. Lack of appropriate lighting, blight, and trash all negatively impact a neighborhood's health. By improving our neighborhood environments, we can begin to restore our connections as neighbors.

Upon her inauguration as Mayor of the City of East St. Louis, Emeka Jackson-Hicks launched Restoration of Hope, a multi-faceted initiative to beautify neighborhoods and increase civic engagement. To date, Restoration of Hope has hosted numerous community clean-up days, improved green spaces and restored basketball courts.

Restoration of Hope fosters social cohesion, serving as a catalyst for improved social bonds and establishing a place for shared community pride and connection. It also has generated youth jobs and platforms for young people to exercise their power.

Strategy #38: Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

To support the revitalization of our community and create conditions that deter crime, we will engage residents and stakeholders to implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). According to the National Crime Prevention Institute, CPTED is defined as “the proper design and effective use of the built environment [which] can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and improvement of the quality of life.” CPTED has been used throughout Europe and North America. CPTED identifies components of the built environment that make crime more likely as well as those environmental supports for prosocial behavior. There are three key steps in CPTED:

1. Identify the purpose/intended use of space/buildings and assess if they support safe usage
2. Define if ownership and borders are clear, how space is used, the rules governing usage
3. Design the space so that form follows function to impact behavior and support safety

**OBJECTIVE 6.3:
IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

Goal 6: Neighborhoods are safe to walk, play and live	
Objective 6.3: Improve transportation safety for young people	
Strategies: #39 Expand volunteer efforts to monitor routes and chaperon children to and from school #40 Expand school transportation accessibility Needs/Protective Factors Addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community support/connectedness Unsafe neighborhoods 	Output Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of volunteers # of kids accompanied to and from school # of policy proposals # of advocates
	Outcome Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # created, amended, or rescinded policies Increased number of volunteers Increased number of kids accompanied to and from school
	Impact Indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased feelings of safety between home and school by youth and parents
	PIER Tactic: Prevention
Leads: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Organizing and Family Issues Parents United for Change Local Policymakers 	Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East St. Louis School District 189 Bi-State Development (Metro) Community- and faith-based organizations

Strategy #39: Expand and parent volunteer patrols to monitor routes and chaperon children to and from school

Strategy #40: Expand school transportation accessibility

After interviewing over 10 residents and hosting a community meeting with over 50 stakeholders, Parents United for Change initiated a campaign to increase safe passage for our youngest children to and from preschool. The group started a parent patrol and won busing for 200 preschool students. FIRST STOP calls for the investing in and expanding efforts to ensure every child has can go to and from school safely.

FIRST STOP also calls for policy change. Currently, school districts are not mandated to provide transportation to students that live within a 1 ½ radius from their school. For the past couple of years, ESA stakeholders have advocated for a change in the law—specifically for current state statute to recognize *“a course or pattern of criminal activity” as a serious safety hazard condition that impedes “adequate transportation” for children residing within 1 ½ miles from the school attended.*

Goal: All children and youth feel and are safe

Mission: To reduce youth violence and victimization in the East St. Louis District 189 footprint.

